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Group activities for church women



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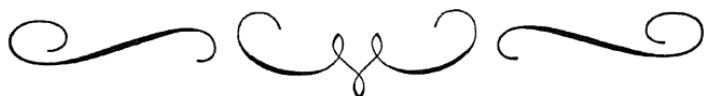








# *Group Activities for Church Women*



BY JANE KIRK

ILLUSTRATED



Harper & Brothers . Publishers . New York

GROUP ACTIVITIES FOR CHURCH WOMEN

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49 East 33rd Street, New York 16, N. Y.

FIRST EDITION

G-E

*Library of Congress catalog card number: 54-8961*

To My Mother and Father  
with love and gratitude



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## F O R E W O R D



Even the best of housewives sometimes feels she's in a rut. Then she takes time out to run next door and visit with a neighbor. It gives her a lift to get away from her own way of doing things and see how someone else does it, and she goes back home with a fresh viewpoint for her own household. So I hope this book will give a sense of church groups sharing their ideas with one another in neighborly fashion, and that through it earnest workers may gain enthusiasm for new endeavor and ideas to inspire a welcome change from routine activities.

Everything that appeals to women as individuals appeals to them as a group. So, when women work in and for their churches, it is natural to find them singing and cooking and sewing, cleaning or decorating a room, entertaining guests, giving thoughtful remembrances, making flowers grow and arranging them artistically, just as they would at home, but on a larger scale. Organizing and planning programs and service projects for their community come as naturally to the well-organized housekeeper in her church group as scheduling a day's housework or planning a party for the youngsters at home. Women are indeed versatile creatures.

And so, this book, in order to be a representative collection of group activities for church women, must cover all these fields of women's interest, from games to gardens, from divorce to dramatics.

How eagerly a good cook takes up a new cookbook and pores over its pages! A new cookbook stimulates a good cook to fresh achievements, reminds her of recipes she hasn't used in a long time, and suggests possibilities for intriguing new menus. So I hope that good church workers may think of this somewhat as a

cookbook full of all sorts of recipes for group activities, new and old, and that it may rouse them to stir up a batch of something appealing for their communities.

I should like to thank the following organizations for making available to me information on specific subjects:

American Bible Society

General Department of United Church Women of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

National Plant, Flower and Fruit Guild

National Recreation Association

New York School of Floral Designing

New York State Department of Institution Management

The Stearns and Foster Company

I should also like to thank *Christian Herald* for permission to reprint this material, which originally appeared in the department "Woman's Place in the Church."

P A R T I



*Special Activities  
of Committees*



## C H A P T E R 1



### Can You Be a Leader—and Will You?

The voting is over, the count is taken, and you are proclaimed the new presiding officer of your group. What a wonderful glow there is about it! It is a warm feeling to hear many hands applauding, and you go home sure that everyone will co-operate beautifully because they like *you* so well.

But, alas, if only this were all there is to being a leader! Every president and chairman from Eisenhower on down has had to face the facts that after all the shouting comes the cold gray dawn when you must roll up your sleeves and go to work.

And so, many shirk the responsibility of being a leader. They make excuses that they haven't enough time or that they haven't the proper qualifications or they'd be too frightened to conduct a meeting. But the need for leaders in today's society is great. And everyone should consider it her duty to serve as a leader in some capacity at least once.

We're all potential leaders of some group, whether it's a small committee meeting, a board or a large organization. Perhaps you will find that being a leader fulfills a dormant urge in you, and you'll go on to more and more responsible leadership; or perhaps you'll prefer to return to personal affairs again. But in either case, you've contributed your share to the church.

One of the commonest problems of any group is that "a few do it all." If your group has that complaint, or deplores the fact that the old guard is in charge and new leaders never get a chance, it's likely you've a lack of leadership material. Unless

each one is willing to assume his obligation to act as leader at some period, this must continue.

The unselfish woman, then, is the one who, when called upon by the nominating committee to take an office, or asked by a presiding officer to take a chairmanship, accepts graciously, thinking, "This is my year to put 'Service before Self,' to put aside a few of my personal affairs to help others." Then she makes every effort to be the best kind of leader possible.

What does it take? If you are a leader now, or have been one, you already know. But if you have never directed anything from the smallest of committees up to president of your organization, you may have only a distorted notion of what it entails. It may seem a glamorous achievement beyond your humble reach, or it may seem a power you've secretly yearned to have bestowed upon you so that you may "improve the way things are done."

It is important, of course, never to join a group unless you believe in its ultimate purposes and aims so sincerely that you are willing to give it your unqualified support. And one should never join so many organizations that she robs her family and home of their rightful share of her time. If you have joined a group, however, it makes sense to accept leadership, even though it may require a sacrifice of your personal convenience.

Certain it is, that having once been a leader you will have a greater appreciation of others who are in this position. Until you have been one yourself you can never understand the sacrifices of self that are required to do the job creditably—the giving up of personal views; the putting aside of one's personal affairs to help workers whenever they call upon you; the giving up of time for personal recreation to prepare successful meetings or appoint your committees and workers with wisdom.

Maybe it's time to redefine your group's goals. Make a renewed effort to accomplish what you have in mind, and eliminate any red tape which tends to accumulate. But most of all, get in some fresh leadership. If oldtimers cling to the offices and won't give new persons a chance, find some way to "graduate" these leaders

into other positions of power and prestige. Appoint them as representatives to a larger group, perhaps. Give them the chairmanship of a committee to revise the bylaws or to investigate something outside the group.

A rule for rotation in office is valuable, because no one person stays too long in a job, giving greater opportunity for new leadership and new ideas to develop, without offending those who have served faithfully but resist change. One characteristic of leadership is to instill faith in the purposes and aims of your organization and inspire co-operation in carrying them out. You will be able to do this in proportion to your own enthusiasm and willingness to work.

You or your group may be afraid of giving authority to someone without experience. But how are new leaders to get experience unless given a chance? You may be one of those who contend that leaders are born and not made. But although a leader may have a general aptitude, some training will doubtless be essential.

Good books from the library on the subject will clarify this business of being a leader. By following a few simple principles of service, any leader can become self-trained with many admiring followers, and guide others confidently.

If you have a strong enough desire to serve the interest of your group, you will be surprised how the qualifications you need for leadership will spring up in you. One woman who had never so much as dared get to her feet to ask a question in a public meeting became so interested in the prospect of more constructive programs for her group that she accepted the position of program chairman without a quiver, and discovered in the process that she had the ability to be a good public speaker when she had something she really wanted to say.

Perhaps you will have to learn tact, or listen more than you talk. Perhaps it is a knowledge of parliamentary procedure you must acquire or a willingness to take suggestion. Perhaps you will have to curb a crusading spirit, a desire to revolutionize things;

perhaps you will have to learn to be more daring, to go along with the group in undertaking something new.

You may have to learn the importance of sharing problems with the group, not trying to solve them yourself, bearing the whole burden. You may have to learn not to be a dissenter, to take a constructive approach to things.

Most certainly you will have to learn to take criticism, both warranted and unwarranted, without going down under it. And, as you will find that the criticism you receive is hardly ever deserved, so you will find that the praise you deserve is hardly ever received. Someone else may even be given the credit you know should come to you. This is when you must with humility find your satisfaction in your own knowledge of a job well done. You must be content with the inner warmth you feel when someone says, "This is our President," or, "She served as our President," because you alone know what it meant to hold the highest honor and highest responsibility within the membership. This is what we mean by "Service before Self."

And when you've come through it all, you're bound to be a better *you*.

Here is a list of reference books:

*How to Work with Groups*, by Trecker, 1952, Woman's Press, New York

*Handbook for Group Leaders*, by Brown and Geis, 1952, Woman's Press, New York

*How to Plan Meetings and Be a Successful Chairman*, Glass, 1951, Merlin Press, Inc., New York

*New Ways to Better Meetings*, by Strauss, Viking Press, New York

*Handbook for Discussion Leaders*, by Auer and Ewbank, 1947, Harper & Brothers, New York

*The Art of Board Membership*, by Sorensen, 1950, Association Press, New York

*How to Prepare a Speech*, by Grimshaw, 1952, Woman's Press, New York

## DUTIES OF A PRESIDENT

*(as defined by the General Department of United Church  
Women in the booklet, "Leadership")*

1. Know the purpose and work to carry it out.
2. Plan an agenda in advance of a meeting, notify all participants and see that all arrangements for the meeting are made before it begins.
3. Preside at the meetings with justice and courtesy to all; if necessary to be absent, arrange for a vice-president to preside.
4. Be an ex-officio member of all committees, except the nominating committee.
5. Represent the organization at meetings of other groups or arrange for an alternate; speak for the organization when necessary.
6. Prepare an annual report, to give at the annual meeting.
7. Check with committees to see that plans are approved by the board or the whole organization, then carried out as approved.
8. Give creative leadership, be receptive to the ideas of others.
9. Be sensitive to the responsibility for binding the church group into a growing unity of work and worship.

## C H A P T E R 2



### *Your Gift of Service to Your Church*

Do you think of what you can give to your church only in terms of dollars and cents? If you do, consider how much else you have to give.

Personal service, for instance, is a gift from the heart—real gold, frankincense and myrrh. You give it often without thinking of it as a gift. Why not hold a Christmas party this year with a special purpose—to uncover hidden talents and help more individuals feel they are an active part of church work?

At the Pacific Beach Presbyterian Church, San Diego, California, the women worked out a plan to dramatize the meaning of the word "talent"—according to Webster, "a special natural ability." Churches often catalog the big talents, but it is difficult to find the right person when it comes to the tasks that are small but indispensable. These ladies reasoned that if there were a listing of the natural abilities of every member, there would be someone to tackle almost any job.

So invitations were sent to church women announcing a tea to be held at the home of a member a few days before Christmas. The invitations promised fun and piqued curiosity with this hint: "We have a new idea, and we want to know what you think of it."

Attendance was even greater than expected at this festive time. After the guests had been served steaming cups of hot tea and ginger in true California style and had sampled homemade dainties from the gaily decorated table, a Tea Program was

handed out. "Have you chosen a Christmas gift for your church?" it asked. "The littlest Angel gave his precious butterfly wings and robins' eggs, and his gifts became a shining star. The littlest Angel was just as perplexed as you when he tried to select his gift. Maybe this will help you make your choice."

And then: "Do you like to be the queen bee or are you a good drone? No, really, would you like to assume responsibility for a project or would you prefer to work under someone?" Next followed a list of items, of which guests were urged to check only those things they really liked to do:

My hobby is \_\_\_\_\_

My specialty in cooking is \_\_\_\_\_

I really don't mind washing dishes.

I would work on a committee to plan a church meal.

I would set tables.

I would be chairman of a decoration committee for one large affair annually.

I would serve on a decorating committee.

I like to wash dishcloths, tablecloths, etc.

I can make two calls a month for church membership or on church members.

I could give \_\_\_\_\_ hours of office work monthly.

I would like to write letters.

I would like to read and mark books for the minister.

I like to make telephone calls.

You may use my home for church-sponsored parties for young people.

I like to teach a Sunday-school class.

I will substitute for a Sunday-school teacher.

I will provide refreshments for young people's gatherings.

I will help with young people's special projects.

I could do this for young people: \_\_\_\_\_

I like to redecorate a room.

I would like to help redecorate a room.

I would serve on a chancel committee.

I would provide flowers for the altar occasionally.

I can arrange flowers for church services.

I like to make corsages.

I would direct one play a year.

I like to be in plays.

I am a good stagehand.

I could help with costuming.

I like to write plays.

I can sell tickets.

I like advertising.

I would serve cookies to the choir occasionally.

I would play the piano for church school groups.

I would like to sing in the choir.

I can give inspirational talks.

I would like to be active in a cottage prayer group.

I will pray regularly for specific church needs.

I like to give book reviews.

I like to be on programs.

I will help with Scouts.

I like to sew.

I didn't find the thing I like *best* to do on this list. I like to: \_\_\_\_\_

You can stimulate response to this questionnaire with a list that suits the needs of your particular group. Be sure to leave a place at the top for name and telephone number. You might give your program a blue cover with a scattering of star stickers in varied sizes.

Cataloging talents is as important as getting folks to list them. Do a businesslike job of this and you will have workers for every need at your fingertips. Set up a small card file, and make each item from your questionnaire a separate classification, such as: "Cooking," "Washing Dishes," "Setting Tables," "Telephoning," "Writing Letters," etc. Arrange the classifications alphabetically. Then list under each the names of all persons (with their telephone numbers) who have offered to perform these services. If an individual has offered more than one type of service, her

name and phone number should be given again under each classification for which she has signed. Then when someone is needed quickly to do a typing job, for example, you look under "Typing" in your file, and there you'll find a list of possible recruits plus their phone numbers. Record on these cards dates when members have served, so that you do not repeat the same ones too often.

Such a system is far more satisfactory than the easier way of cataloguing by name only. That involves simply listing each person's name at the top of your card, followed by the services she has offered. But this is of little use to you unless you are trying to find a niche for a certain individual. Then you say, "Mrs. L. wants very much to be active; what can we give her to do?" Looking on her card you see what she has offered and you try to find agreeable work for Mrs. L. Or you go through all the cards in the file box until you find someone who has volunteered for typing. More than likely, then, Mrs. B will be called over and over again, because her name is at the front of the file, while Mrs. W feels everyone has forgotten her. Therefore, since it is the service you want to supply more often than the individual, listing by services is more practical.

Here's how to tabulate and file the results of your survey.

A committee of six can handle a hundred questionnaires in little more than an hour. Give each worker a few questionnaires at a time, while the chairman handles the file box. A worker looks down her questionnaire and sees what services are checked. She then asks for these cards, say, "Cooking" and "Sewing," from the chairman, fills in the name and phone number from her questionnaire, and hands the cards back to the chairman who keeps them filed alphabetically until someone else asks for these cards. Turning to her next questionnaire the worker finds "Letter Writing," and "Sunday-school Teaching," asks the chairman for those cards and so on. The chairman will have to keep five such workers supplied with the proper cards at all times, but an alert person can do it.

As you compile your findings, you will probably find them as

surprising as did the San Diego ladies. You may discover that dear Mrs. K., who always ends up stationed in the kitchen, would love to take part in a play. She would have been too timid to volunteer, but here she had only to check it on paper. Or perhaps the costumes desperately needed for the forthcoming skit might otherwise never have been discovered in Mrs. R.'s attic. Mrs. T., who looks like a Fifth Avenue fashion plate, may surprisingly say she really likes doing dishes. There will be some who especially like to sell tickets. Each has an opportunity to ask for the work she likes best, and everyone goes home with a satisfied sense of having given a worth-while gift—the pledge of service throughout the year.

## C H A P T E R 3



### *The Program Committee Goes to Work*

So you're on your group's program committee for the coming year! Will you take it the easy way, or will you do a bang-up job of it—a job that will make the members sit up and take notice, a job that will increase attendance? With all the tools provided for today's program committees, you can't miss.

Ask yourself first: "Has our group really been putting into use the program material provided by our denominational headquarters?" Some groups, we know, are not aware that such material exists. If you have not been receiving any, write at once to your denominational headquarters and see what is available. Then take time to study it.

Make a careful choice of leaders to take charge of these programs—and don't necessarily pick those who *always* do it! You need leaders with imagination as well as consecration. Use your own imagination together with the ideas provided in your program material to give dramatic emphasis and variety to each month's programs. Work out a quiz one month, a panel discussion the next, illustrative films, a dramatic skit, and maybe a debate.

Most program material includes "canned" programs, in addition to the "build your own" type. In other words, "canned" programs are those all ready for use without any preparation on your part. You simply read them off. These are good to fall back on in case of emergency, or where groups are too small to have a program committee large enough to work out a topic in detail.

But try to give every program you use some local significance, some relation to your particular group or community that will make it "belong" to those who hear it.

For instance, bring out how the topic applies to your own organization, and what each member can do about it. Invite local speakers or discussion leaders definitely connected with the topic under consideration.

Naturally, you are not obliged to follow the program plans of your denominational headquarters without any deviation. They are only suggestions to guide you. Other subjects may be more vital to your community and require the attention of your group. A program poll is a good way of determining what your members consider important. If there has been criticism of previous programs, this will clear the air. Give everyone a sense of having guided the choice of the year's programs.

Here are some basic pointers for your program planning:

Involve as many individuals in each program as possible without making the program too long. Two speakers or readers are better than one, and three are better than two. Panel discussions are good for including a number of individuals, particularly those who might feel ill at ease making a speech. They will be less self-conscious in an informal interchange of ideas. Quiz programs will give life to a speaker who might be tedious alone. Station four or five members on the platform to question the speaker at intervals.

Preview your program in some way, or you may suffer a severe shock as it unfolds. Don't be hesitant about giving a guest speaker a definite assignment with a specific topic and indication of points to be brought out. Far from being offended, he will appreciate knowing exactly what you want him to tell your audience. If his speech is part of a planned program, you can tell him what the purpose of the program is, and how his knowledge fits into it. Or, let each member of the program committee prepare five questions and present him with the collection. This will give a cross section of what your group would like to hear.

If you are using a "canned" program, hold a preliminary re-

hearsal, so you will know that persons who are to read papers will not falter. Panel-discussion groups always hold a preliminary meeting with the moderator to become acquainted and learn each other's points of view. They decide upon the general scope of the discussion and points to be brought out. Arrange to see films, particularly amateur ones, in advance, and cut them down to those that are really lively.

If you have some topics which are musts on your year's program, but invariably dull, study a way of making them click. For instance, the treasurer's report in any annual business meeting passes over the heads of the best-intentioned of us. Why not act it out? Dress various members to impersonate the items on the budget, and let each one step up and demand his due from the treasurer. Use your own membership on programs whenever possible. Some program committees rush about coaxing guest speakers into their midst, while individuals in their own group or church could do equally well in roles of speaker or moderator. It's fun to see your friends perform and it gives them a sense of accomplishment.

Remember that visual displays add color and emphasis to any program, even if they are nothing more than maps. Appoint a property manager on your committee to gather display articles pertaining to each program. Have a member in charge of publicity, so that the work you've done to prepare your meeting will not be wasted. Give one member the responsibility of writing notes of appreciation to all who participate in your programs.

And now, here's a sample of the program material available from various denominational headquarters:

*Methodist:* Program material for entire twelve months is worked out under a unified theme for the year. Two programs are provided for each month. One gives an outline with suggestions for talks, resource material and ideas for building the program into your own proportions. The other is complete and ready for use "as is." Program material is abundantly augmented by features in the magazine *The Methodist Woman*, in which skits, candlelight services, meditations and programs for particular

months are presented. Address queries to Literature Headquarters, Woman's Division of Christian Service, 7820 Reading Road, Cincinnati 37, Ohio.

*Reformed Church in America:* Every year presidents of women's societies get a "Program of the Month" packet, containing a collection of eight or nine worship services and five ready-to-use programs. In mission fields an effort is made to suit the programs to both rural and city groups. This church features an exchange of women's ideas, encourages women of all local groups to send in programs and services which have been outstanding. These are kept on file to be sent to other groups upon request. Files are becoming enriched with candlelight services, Easter, Mother's Day, and other special observances. Send to Department of Women's Work of the Mission Board, Reformed Church in America, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10.

*Presbyterian, U.S.A.:* A "Program Guide" is worked out with twelve programs for the year. Two types of programs are included: those for large meetings which are planned for inspiration, and suggestions for study to be used as programs for Circles. Resource material is listed for programs to be tied in with movements in the magazine *Outreach*. Through leadership training and summer conferences, the Presbyterian church helps its members develop worth-while programs. A booklet, *Planning*, is available, which briefly lists the duties of each of the secretaries on the program committee, and new material available for programs. Plans for Bible study are also provided. Query Presbyterian Distribution Service, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10.

*Congregational-Christian:* Complete program booklet containing six programs with added lists of resource material. *Guideposts*, a monthly publication, augments this. Write to Pilgrim Press, 19 South LaSalle Street, Chicago 3, Illinois.

*Episcopal: Church Ways* is a publication which goes to every rector, and as many church members as possible are encouraged to take it. Appearing six times a year, it gives suitable material for programs. The May issue suggests projects for the coming

year. Address queries to National Council P. E. Church, 281 Fourth Avenue, New York, New York.

*Unitarian:* Program material is developed in terms of committee work. There are six areas in which work is carried on, and the six committees each have program material prepared for them, under "Churchmanship," "Church Extension," "Service Work," "Inter-faith Activities," "World Fellowship," and "Education." Send to General Alliance of Unitarian Women, 25 Beacon Street, Boston 8, Massachusetts.

*Baptist:* Program packet contains eight prepared programs. *Program Pointers* is another publication which offers suggestions and resources for groups wishing to work up their own programs. Write to Baptist Literature Bureau, 152 Madison Avenue, New York.

Woman's Home Companion Service offers packaged programs which are ready to use or which may be built up by using the bibliography, films, posters and booklets listed with the programs. Send for a listing of subjects. Address: Betty Carter, 640 Fifth Avenue, New York 19.

## C H A P T E R 4



### *Put "Meat" in Your Meetings!*

Tired of programs devoted to flower arranging, table setting, recipe exchanging, and the like? These days it takes programs with a broader scope to draw active women into your groups; there are so many demands on everyone's time, a busy woman can't spend precious hours on unimportant subjects. If you have been complaining that members are dropping out of your groups and it's hard to get new ones, maybe it's time to put more "meat" into your meetings.

The forum is one way to do just that. Webster describes a forum as "a public meeting at which topics of interest are discussed by leaders and audience." Pick yourselves some vital topics and proceed from there.

You may plan your forum on a small scale, holding it just within your group. But why not let the whole community in on the fun? If there is a local Council of Church Women you can do this through that organization. Otherwise, band together with other suitable churches or groups. This will give a sponsorship extensive enough to attract some of the best leaders in various fields.

A speaker for the Senate Crime Investigation Committee once said that if every organized group in the country would arouse its members to righteous indignation, organized crime could be wiped out. A series of forums on organized gambling, racketeering, race tracks, dope peddling, and crime in politics would unquestionably arouse such "righteous indignation" among your

membership. Evil brought out in the open will be overcome much sooner than if it is left to fester in secret places.

Suppose there is one outstanding evil in your community—a race track, for instance, where small-income groups are losing much of their week's wages, resulting in hardships to families. Get some well-informed lawyer, judge or police magistrate to talk and present statistics—income of the race track per year, taxes paid, etc.

Perhaps your local officers have been lax in enforcing anti-gambling laws in your community. Discussing it publicly is the best way to awaken them to their duty. Or perhaps your speaker will suggest some form of organized action which you can take as a group to combat the crime under discussion. Naming names and pointing out exact places in your community where such crimes operate is most effective in getting action from law-enforcement agencies. Maybe there are letters you can write to your state representatives or congressmen. If necessary, you may even be able to do your own investigating. Women in many localities have done it successfully. Merely the report of your forum in the local newspaper will turn the public spotlight on crime.

There are other local subjects worthy of your consideration—race relations, the struggle for the public schools, conditions of migrant workers, injustices in the fraternity system—make your own list!

In addition there are national and world-wide issues to consider. For this you might get some ideas from recommendations of the Committee on Christian World Relations of the General Department of United Church Women.

Become informed and be able to take proper action on subjects such as the Convention Against Genocide, the Human Rights Covenant (examine your own communities in the light of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights), the Japanese Peace Treaty, the plight of refugees and migrants throughout the world, and other subjects of similar nature that arise from day to day. Learn what stand the United Nations is taking on

these subjects, and be prepared to do your part as a group to inform your senators and representatives of your opinion on these subjects, when occasion demands.

Forums can have more of an educational slant, if you prefer. Every community has its share of famous people whom very few of their own neighbors ever have an opportunity to hear.

The Reverend Albert C. Ronander, pastor of the Wilton, Connecticut, Congregational Church, realized this when he encouraged his Social Action Committee to institute forums in the church four years ago. Built in 1790, this church is an ideal setting for the "town hall" type of meeting.

To make this a community affair the committee soon invited the other local church, St. Matthew's Episcopal, and the League of Women Voters to join them in sponsoring the forum. Meetings were held every Sunday evening during the spring, summer and early fall. Widely publicized, they were attended by from one hundred to three hundred persons.

Speakers either lived nearby or were invited by members of the community who knew them. Some token remuneration was offered them, but was usually refused. Subjects embrace labor-management relations, our national defense and the atom bomb, Korea and the Far East, race prejudice, the United Nations, American folklore, and modern tensions and emotional stability.

Ministers of both churches take turns conducting the meetings, which begin with a patriotic hymn and an invocation. A moderator introduces the speaker. The moderator preferably should be familiar both with the subject and the speaker. The main address is followed by an offering, which is used to support the forum. Attendants are provided with paper and pencil as they enter and invited to jot down questions which occur to them. These are dropped with the offering into the collection baskets and brought to the front.

The moderator presides at the question period, drawing questions from the baskets and reading them, while the speaker, standing beside him, answers them.

A similar forum which has been achieving notice is the Amos

Fortune Forum of Jaffrey Center, New Hampshire. Its figure-head is Amos Fortune, the African slave who bought his freedom, became a good businessman, and left money to provide for educational purposes. In the same meeting house in which Amos Fortune, who thought highly of public speaking, once participated freely in stormy discussions the Amos Fortune Forum now meets. Outstanding scholars living nearby provide most of the principal addresses. No charges are made, nobody is asked to contribute. It is simply a community project in which everyone shares.

If you are not certain how to organize and conduct a forum, listen to radio's *Town Meeting of the Air*. You may also secure a copy of *Christian Foundations for Lasting Peace*, a study and discussion book for the Christian Women's Action program for study groups, which gives directions for planning forums and panel discussions. Address: General Department of United Church Women, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, and enclose 60c.

*Leadership for United Church Women* devotes a chapter to descriptions of various kinds of discussion groups. A "Buzz Session" helps to start individuals of a large group talking and thinking about a given subject. In this kind of forum, after the speaker has finished, the audience is divided into small groups which get together and discuss the problem. Each group elects a leader who records the thought of the group and reports it to the whole audience at the close of the discussion period. Groups may ask questions which are answered by the speaker.

Women have been chided for spending too much time on trivial things instead of taking a more constructive part in shaping the world in which we live. Let's prove that clean-thinking Christian women are alert and ready to help make this a better world!

## C H A P T E R 5



### *Making Your Group World-Minded*

How world-minded are you? Does your group think of religion only in terms of the congregation with whom you worship each Sunday, the handful with whom you carry on community and missionary service? Or do you have the wider view of women who have identified themselves with the Ecumenical movement?

Throughout the United States there are many thousands of women who are informed about this movement. These women have registered their names with the United Council of Church Women, showing their willingness to "stand up and be counted" among those who are grateful for the growth of Christian unity.

What is this Ecumenical movement? Henry Smith Leiper, associate general secretary of the World Council of Churches, writes that the Ecumenical movement is not an organization or a plan, but "a spiritual mood, which has to do with the response of Christians and Christian institutions to the will of Christ that His followers be one."

The word "ecumenical" is taken from the Greek, and means "that which belongs to the whole household of faith throughout the world." Among the principles of the Ecumenical movement are freedom and respect for the autonomy of member churches, oneness in Christ as in accordance with God's will, and functional unity now in the area of agreement. Stress is placed on achieving fellowship in community of the spirit through worship, study, consultation, common action and interchurch aid.

The United Council of Church Women is in charge of the

Ecumenical register. This plan was a one-time drive which would enable the organization to offer the names of a vast number of ecumenically minded church women when the United Council joined six other interdenominational organizations to form a more inclusive organ—the National Council of Churches of Christ.

The UCCW, formed in 1941, has grown vigorously in the succeeding years. Its activities are carried on by local groups in communities of all sizes everywhere in the United States. Local councils work to strengthen fellowship, broaden and deepen religious experiences. They work together in community service, in interdenominational missionary projects, and toward a Christian world order. Does *your* community have such an affiliation?

It would be worth while to form such a group. If there is a wrong in your community, this is a way to right it. All church women in a community working together can achieve goals and undertake projects which would be too extensive for small groups. Here's a sample of what some of the local councils have done:

In Atlanta, Georgia, members of the council attend Recorder's Court to note fair and equal sentences meted out to all misdemeanor cases in the lower courts. Racial problems are being tackled by discussion groups held to talk over prejudices, discriminations and inequality of opportunities. The council maintains a year-round nursery school, conducts public youth forums in city high schools, a class at the city prison farm to teach reading, writing and arithmetic to illiterate Negro girls, supplies needs for prisons and hospitals, staffs a volunteer health center. Members appeared at a public housing project hearing and testified in behalf of minority groups. Projects are now under way to house hundreds of needy families. Crib service is provided in Union Station where weary mothers and babies may rest between trains. The council staffs nutrition classes sponsored by the Red Cross in schools and clinics of underprivileged areas.

In Alliance, Nebraska, the Council of Church Women persuaded the town council to improve conditions of a village of Indian migratory workers on the outskirts of town. A water main

was laid to the village, a recreation hall built, and laundries and showers installed.

In Des Moines, Iowa, the Negro problem is being faced squarely with Negro and white groups working together. A special committee of the local council made a survey of the opportunities the Negro had in educational and vocational training, occupations, wages, recreation, housing, church life, and restaurants. Facts of this survey were published, showing that Negroes were being denied equal opportunities. Already prejudice has begun to melt.

In Fort Wayne, Indiana, a recreational program was carried on for the benefit of returned servicemen and families who lived in the low income housing project. An old recreation hall was used to keep youngsters off the street and provide instruction for them. There were classes in craft work and art, games for small boys and girls, basket ball and volley ball for teen-agers, and a library, as well as the services of a registered nurse.

The Stamford, Connecticut, Council of Church Women provided assurances for thirty-six displaced persons between December, 1949, and March, 1950, and aided in resettling twelve already here who needed help.

The Twin City Council of Church Women, consisting of eight churches of Scottsbluff and Gering, Nebraska, united with the American Legion Auxiliary in running a used-clothing center. Clothes were donated by people of the valley. Those who were able paid a few cents for clothing; others were given outfit free.

The Seattle Council of Church Women went to bat for individuals, protesting un-American reception given a few returning Japanese, helping unemployed find jobs, working for housing without discrimination. It helped provide housing for the Federated Colored Clubwomen of the U.S. when their national convention was held in Seattle. When Japanese were returning in great numbers, the council organized a broom brigade and cleaned up some of the Japanese churches which had been used for storerooms during the internment period. Cots and other

equipment were secured from the U.S. Army for temporary hostels for Japanese.

In Syracuse, New York, a Tot Lot project was undertaken by the Council. Located in a troubled area, the project provided wholesome recreation for children up to eight. Both Negro and white children attended and both Negro and white mothers assisted.

The Brooklyn, New York, Council sponsors monthly birthday parties for one of the borough hospitals where approximately one hundred old ladies are housed. The hospital makes a birthday cake, and the council provides a useful gift for each lady celebrating a birthday during the month. This group also shares with the Manhattan Council the obligation of meeting displaced persons as they arrive in the port of New York.

Reports such as these are coming in every day from active local councils. To organize your own you need one woman willing to call together a small group of women representing different denominations and discuss the possibility of forming a council. This group selects a planning committee.

The planning committee arranges an organizational meeting. It appoints a nominating committee to prepare a slate of officers, arranges for a meeting place and program, and a worship service emphasizing unity. A temporary chairman and a secretary are selected by this planning committee, and are briefed on the procedure of the meeting.

To the organizational meeting should be invited representatives of women's organizations of every local church—including all races and nationalities—the Salvation Army, and interdenominational groups such as the Y.W.C.A. At the organizational meeting the need for a council is presented and discussed, constitution and bylaws are suggested, and a vote of approval taken. Officers are then elected and installed.

From this day you are launched. An executive board should be set up, including one representative of the woman's society of each co-operating local church. Committees may be formed to act on world missions, Christian world relations, and finances.

A minimum of four meetings a year may be held—World Day of Prayer (the first Friday in Lent), May Fellowship Day (the first Friday in May), World Community Day (the first Friday in November), and an annual meeting for election of officers, reports and discussion of local projects. Every woman of every church in the community should be invited to these meetings.

From the United Council of Church Women, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, you may also obtain pamphlets which give detailed information on organization of a local group.

A woman of vision—backed by others of similar conviction and co-operative spirit—can spearhead such a program. Are *you* that woman?

## C H A P T E R 6



### *Let's Get Those Bibles Open!*

A beautifully bound Bible is an asset any home can be proud of. But how often you see this kind of Bible, and how seldom one that is as dog-eared as a library book! What can you do as a group to promote more widespread Bible reading?

For ten years the American Bible Society has been promoting a special program known as World-Wide Bible Reading each year between Thanksgiving and Christmas. A lonely Marine in the southwest Pacific gave the Society its impetus for beginning this in 1943, when he wrote to his parents asking them to join with him in reading identical passages from their Bibles every day. That way he felt closer to his family and home.

The Bible Society thought other separated families might like this idea, and so they began publishing lists of Bible selections to be read each day from Thanksgiving through Christmas. These have been circulated every year since, not only among servicemen and their families, but everywhere throughout the United States and abroad. The selections are listed on a card shaped to serve also as a bookmark.

Additional passages are offered those who want to continue reading the Bible the last six days of the year, and also for those who would like readings for every day of the coming year.

So many convenient excuses can prevent us from reading our Bibles regularly. "I'll read it when I have more time," a busy person may say. Or, from one less familiar with the Scriptures, "I never know where to begin; there's so much of it." The selec-

tions provided by the Bible Society help in making Bible reading a daily habit, and point out the value of turning to the Word of Life for the answers to one's daily human problems.

Listed with the selections are these five directions to guide you in receiving help from your Bible reading:

1. Hold faithfully a stated daily period for Bible reading.
2. Read carefully with mind alert and if possible without interruption.
3. Read prayerfully and slowly. Let God through the Bible speak directly to you.
4. Read with expectation of finding the personal message each day's passage has for you.
5. Re-read a statement which grips you. Work it into your life and pass it on. Perhaps you can memorize a key verse and repeat it during the day, or copy out a verse to carry and refer to throughout the day.

Besides reading these Bible passages yourself or in a group, what else can you do to encourage others to join in this inspiring activity?

i. You might sponsor special Bible-reading activities in your church:

a. *Bible breakfasts.* Invite women's groups from other churches to join with you in reading the Bible at a series of breakfast meetings. Each church may take its turn playing host and serving breakfast to others. In Davenport and Bettendorf, Iowa, a group of Bible breakfasts were held simultaneously in ten Protestant churches on a certain Friday at 9:30 a.m. Women were asked to attend the church nearest their homes, regardless of denomination, and to bring old or unusual Bibles for display. The program was designed to familiarize every church woman with the Bible and to enable her to read it with greater understanding. Pastors spoke on "The Word of Life in Living Language." The open Bible and a candle centered each table where the reading was to take place.

b. *Men's business luncheons.* At Penn Yan, New York, a series of evangelical meetings were held during the Thursday noon

hour. Luncheon was served to the men for the first twenty minutes, and the next twenty were set aside for devotionals. It was made clear that men were to come just as they were from office, shop or mill. These were not "dress-up" affairs. The same idea could be carried out to encourage Bible reading. The pastor might give a five-minute talk on how Bible reading can be applied to business affairs, and the last fifteen minutes groups of four to eight men could gather around tables to read Bible passages.

c. *Young people's programs.* The United Christian Youth Fellowship of Ashton, Illinois, a town of nine hundred persons, last year held devotions at noon each school day between Thanksgiving and Christmas. The meetings were held in the Presbyterian Church, located across the street from the school. Lasting less than ten minutes, the meetings consisted of a hymn, followed by the reading of the Scripture passage for the day and a closing prayer. The church was filled every day, rain or shine, with young people, and with business workers returning from their lunch hours.

2. Plan programs designed to encourage interest in the Bible.

a. Schedule programs throughout the year for your group on the subject of the Bible. Assign members to do research and prepare papers to be read at consecutive meetings on the Bible —its history, its geography, the biographies in it, its influence upon art, music, literature, and drama through the ages. For a social meeting you could play biblical quiz games, such as those found in the booklet, *Everybody's Party Book*, by Harry Githens, \$1, available from Eldridge Entertainment House, Inc., Franklin, Ohio.

b. Present a series of monthly dramatizations of Bible stories, enacted by your young people, prepared, directed, and costumed by you.

c. Assemble a display of rare, unusual or interesting Bibles, and provide with it impressive facts which you can secure from the American Bible Society, such as: The Bible has been translated into 1,108 languages and dialects, in whole or in part. The

entire Bible has been translated into 188 languages; the New Testament into 243 more; parts of at least one whole book into 585 more; and selections into 92 more. Loan this collection to interested groups and organizations in your community, or provide a permanent glassed display for it in a prominent place.

One church in San Francisco, California, centered the worship service for Universal Bible Sunday around an exhibit of sixty unusual Bibles, which were displayed on a table across the chancel, brightly illuminated so they could be seen by the entire congregation. John 3:16 was read in sixteen different languages and in Braille.

3. You might promote interest in Bible reading through some local organization.

a. *Stores.* R. H. Macy's in New York City annually features a Bible display in one of their windows and last year exhibited the World-wide Bible Reading poster and distributed more than a thousand of the World-wide Bible Reading bookmarks among customers. Why not approach your local store with this idea?

b. *Schools.* Invite your school to display the World-wide Bible Reading poster, and offer to secure enough bookmarks to pass out to all pupils. In Atlanta, Georgia, the week before Universal Bible Sunday was designated "Bible Emphasis Week." Students of one high school invited ministers of the city to speak in each home room that week, and forty-one ministers accepted these invitations. On Universal Bible Sunday fifty-eight young people went by twos to twenty-nine churches to tell of the good these messages had done among students. In a town in Maryland the Woman's Club placed a linen chart of the Ten Commandments in every schoolroom in the county to combat juvenile delinquency. Might not this be an appropriate project for your group during this period of Bible reading? You can get a 4' x 8' linen chart of the Ten Commandments for \$1.50 by addressing A. H. Eilers, 1224 Pine Street, St. Louis 1, Missouri.

c. *Libraries.* Your suggestion may serve to remind libraries that they can tie in with World-wide Bible Reading. A display of Bibles in their main room, with a poster above it, would be

effective, and no doubt they would like to have some of the bookmarks with Bible references to give out at this time.

d. *Community effort.* You might inspire a large-scale affair such as the Bible reading fete held at New Haven, Connecticut. Four hundred seats were set up on the New Haven green, and a bandstand was erected to house an electric organ and public address system. Not only clergymen read the Word to the town-wide audience, but also lawyers, teachers, businessmen, officers of the law and the mayor.

4. There are many ways you might distribute the daily Bible reading bookmarks.

- a. Enclose them with your personal Christmas cards.
- b. Enclose them with the regular November mailing to your church membership.
- c. Give them to Sunday-school pupils to encourage them to do daily Bible reading, and get their families to join them in regular Bible reading as a family group.
- d. Local welfare organizations, or your own visiting committee, might like to distribute them to bedridden and aged folks, as well as to inmates of local prisons.

All World-Wide Bible Reading materials—bookmarks, posters, manual for ministers, and other helps—may be secured from the American Bible Society, 450 Park Avenue, New York 22.

## CHAPTER 7



### *Books Make Good Programs*

With the cold winter months comes leisure for reading. Even more enjoyable is reading when it can be shared with friends! The church that wishes to include the interests of all its members in its activities will surely make some provision for book fun and fellowship.

Books offer so many possibilities. There are reading clubs, book exchanges, literary luncheons and teas, children's book fairs, discussion groups for couples' clubs or young folks, and storytelling for children. Different age groups can be served through these various mediums. Thus church leaders can develop stimulating programs from everyone's natural interest in books.

Reading clubs for book discussions can be highly satisfying. You may form any age group into such a club, particularly adults in the retirement age bracket, who have plenty of leisure time. Here is a way to encourage those who like to read to do so without feeling that it shuts them away from human contact.

You will want to decide at the outset whether the aim of your club will be reading for pleasure or for improvement. Choose the books that are to be read accordingly. One reading club which met in a church reviewed and discussed the following books: *The Keys of the Kingdom* by Cronin, *The Robe* by Douglas, *The Nazarene* by Asch, *Christ of the Indian Road* by Jones. Well-written, informative books make for more Christian, more wholesome and better-informed family life.

You may want to purchase the books for your club as a group

and pass them from one member to another. Or, each member may be responsible for buying the ones he will review. If you have more members than meetings, or if you choose to review rather long books, as many as four members may read one book, and each summarize a part of it for the others.

A Favorite Book Club is another angle to the reading-club plan. Ask everyone to bring to the first meeting of the year his all-time favorite book. Place these on display. Make a list of them which can be copied to give to all the members. Allowing time for one book per meeting, have the person whose choice it is give a short review of it, and also tell why it is his favorite. Others in the group who have read the book may share their views on it, and lively discussions should ensue. If a specific book is scheduled for each meeting, the entire group will have an opportunity to read it beforehand in preparation for the meeting, and be ready to talk about it together.

A book exchange is a natural outgrowth of the Favorite Book Club. Ask everyone to bring to each meeting a book he has particularly enjoyed, which he thinks others may like. Sometimes it is helpful if a summary is prepared in order to give others an idea of what a book contains. Place these books on display and let members of the group choose those they would like to borrow. If there are several requests for one, the owner may keep a reserve list of would-be borrowers, and lend it to each in turn. A book exchange of this sort is ideally suited to a location where there is no public library.

Literary luncheons and teas are usually special events. For a luncheon you will want a speaker's table at which will be seated up to ten guests, either authors (if you can get them) or persons who are especially capable or appropriate reviewers. Each one will be introduced and allowed ten minutes to briefly describe his book. If authors are present, they will be able to tell how they came to write the book, always an interesting feature. Copies of books to be discussed should be on display on special tables placed where people can look them over without being crowded.

Clippings of reviews of books on exhibit might be pasted on a sheet of poster board and displayed.

For a literary tea your plans will be much the same, except that speakers may be seated on a platform and talk to the group informally seated about the room. Serve tea afterward, and let guests meet and visit with the speakers over the teacups.

Such an affair may be used as a fund-raising plan, if you choose, by charging admission. Contact a local bookshop or religious bookstore, and ask if they are interested in furnishing a display of their books and appointing a representative from among the group to take orders. A librarian or teacher may be your speaker.

Put the books on display, and let guests look over your selection and place orders with the representative of the bookshop. An author present to autograph copies of his book will naturally stimulate sales. For displaying a large number of books, arrange volumes by subject—fiction, cookbooks and household subjects, children's books, religious, etc. Your group can organize the display, and probably help with taking orders.

A Children's Book Fair is a good idea for parents' groups to sponsor. Have a speaker who will give pointers on how to select books for children or perhaps to talk on the pros and cons of the classics as opposed to modern-day children's books. Display a good selection of recent books for youngsters. You can make your display more intriguing by collecting toys designed from storybook characters, such as Raggedy Ann and Andy, Winnie-the-Pooh, Alice-in-Wonderland dolls, Uncle Wiggley and others. A table of best-loved children's books from church families might prove interesting, particularly if they have the worn look of books read and reread by the young folks.

Storytelling makes a happy activity for youngsters during the winter months and a rewarding experience for those who enjoy being with children. You may organize groups to meet for storytelling in the church after school hours or on Saturdays. Letting the children dramatize the story as it unfolds gives them an active part and helps them remember what they've heard.

Sunday-school teachers are especially aware of the value of effective storytelling in connection with their teaching.

Some churches have book-review groups which meet once a month to hear a book that is of interest to the congregation and other friends reviewed by the minister or an invited guest. In other churches young people may gather at the pastor's home or in the church parlor on Sunday evening to hear books reviewed. Unlike storytelling, the book review does not attempt to take the place of reading a book. It merely summarizes, giving highlights that might interest another in reading it. Specially selected passages are usually read to give an impression of the author's style and to illustrate certain situations vividly. Discussing the book after the review gives an opportunity for exchange of ideas, and, with young people, offers a way of getting better acquainted and of learning and studying under a pastor's guidance.

Couples' clubs may have a special interest in meeting to review and discuss the latest books on child care and training, particularly as it relates to religious training of children in the home. The Iowa Child Welfare Research Station offers several interesting pamphlets: *The Modern Child and Religion* by Hedley S. Dimock, *Guiding the Religious Development of the Child* and *Character through Religious Control* by David M. Trout. Address the Department of Publications, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, for their listing of publications. Or your own denominational headquarters will provide you with this sort of material.

Women's societies often use book reviews as program material. You may schedule a whole year's programs, assigning different members to be responsible for reviewing certain books. Books are usually selected in advance by the program planning committee, who will choose books on related subjects, such as the lives of famous religious leaders, the lives of famous women, a series of travel books covering the countries of the world most in the news, and so on. If yours is a missionary group, you might like to choose books for missionary education. Write to the Joint Commission on Missionary Education, National Council of Churches

of Christ in America, 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York, for their listing.

And now comes the time when it is *your* turn to review a book—and you've never done it before in your life! Don't be dismayed. Book reviewing can be a truly rewarding experience. But these few simple rules may help:

First, look forward to the event with enthusiasm. If your book has not already been selected for you, it's important to choose one that will appeal to the interests of your particular audience. Your enthusiasm will be genuine if you pick one you've enjoyed reading. Recent books are easier to handle than classics. Long novels with complicated plots and characters galore will leave your listeners befuddled unless you are an experienced book reviewer. Biography, a record of experience, or travel will be a breeze. You can draw selections from these at will.

Having chosen your book, read it rapidly to get a first impression. Then go over it thoughtfully to decide what part will be most dramatic or interesting to your group. Published reviews will help you summarize the book and give interesting details about the author. Your local librarian will assist you in finding these.

Next, organize your review. It is always far better to talk to your group rather than read them a paper. The main points you want to cover may be jotted down on small index cards to jog your memory as you go along. Be sure to have the book itself with you, with passages you want to read aloud carefully indicated.

Ask how long you are expected to talk, and then go over your review in private to be sure it will fill in the time, but not run over. If no limit is set, prepare for about thirty minutes.

The "message" of the book, if it has one, should be presented at the start of your review. Show how the author brings out this message, and conclude by stating it again in different words.

If you must review a novel, a simple pattern is to start your review with a brief outline of the plot, and then expand it by describing your favorite character and reading to the group

several of your favorite scenes or situations. Before reading any of these you will need to prepare your listeners with a little description of where the scene fits into the plot and what was the occasion for it.

Above all, be natural in your presentation. A book review is not something to be handled with kid gloves and your most flowery speech. Talk about it as you would tell your best friend about something that happened at home or a movie you liked. Use your own language and it will be fun and of interest to everyone—including yourself.

## C H A P T E R 8



### *Exploring the Language of Symbols*

How curious are you? Did you ever look around you at the stained-glass windows of your church, at the appointments of your sanctuary, and notice their decorations? Perhaps such things in your own church have become merely part of the background and so familiar that you really don't *see* them at all. But when you've visited another church, for a wedding, say, you may have looked about more observantly.

Suppose you saw a series of four windows, with the heads of a man, an eagle, a lion and a calf wreathed in wings. Would you know what they meant? Or why that little white lamb is carrying a banner? Or why there is a border of oak leaves around the windows?

If you have ever wondered about such decorations, you no doubt passed them off as a personal whim of the designer. But you would find that most of them are there for reasons that reach far back into the past. Even the simplest decorations of your church may retain some traces of the ancient manner of expressing religious beliefs—through symbols.

Long ago, when few persons knew how to read and write, messages were conveyed by pictures. Today our media of religious publicity are the printed book, the newspaper, radio and television; but in olden times it was necessary to communicate by means of carving and painting. That is why the medieval cathedrals were so ornately decorated—to speak to the people of that age in allegorical and symbolic terms which were easy for

them to understand. Today we need to know the code in order to decipher the messages they once read so freely.

Understanding your church symbolism can be a fascinating hobby, if you go into it deeply enough; or, even briefly considered, it can awaken your membership to the hidden meanings of things about them.

Next time it's your turn to prepare a program for your group, why not organize a symbol treasure hunt? This would make an especially good program for some meeting when the menfolks are included. It will take some research on your part to make it really interesting, but the effort will be rewarding.

Divide your program into two parts: first, the explanation of symbolism; second, the treasure hunt through the church in search of symbols. Make both lively and enlightening. Be colorful and dramatic in your presentation. No need to make a subject heavy by being too scholarly, even though the books you may read on the subject are.

Start your program by showing what symbols are—"something that (not being a portrait) stands for something else." To illustrate this graphically, appoint a committee to collect an exhibit of present-day symbols in common use—advertising trademarks, money, flags, army or navy insignia, coats of arms, fraternity pins, pictures of a crown and scepter, national or state seals, etc. Number the items in your exhibit, and give everyone a slip of paper as he enters and let him jot down what he thinks each symbol stands for. You may even give a prize to the one who correctly identifies the most. Or, you might have paper cutouts of a scythe, a heart, a hatchet, an egg, an acorn, a fir tree, wishbone, four-leaf clover, horseshoe, a slate, a firecracker, a ring, a jack-o'-lantern, etc. Ask what each of these reminds you of.

Having established what symbols are, you will now want to have some discussion of church symbolism in particular. Any explanation of facts becomes less tedious when you get audience participation into the act. Prepare your information as a series of questions to be fired at the audience, calling on those who raise their hands to volunteer the answers. Have a panel of three

experts on the platform, who will really know the answers and can take turns answering if the audience should fail to respond.

Here is a sample of the sort of things you may ask:

1. What symbols are used to represent God, the Father? *Ans.* A hand or the all-seeing eye.
2. Name an everyday use of one of these. *Ans.* The eye on the dollar bill.
3. What are some of the figures used to represent Christ? *Ans.* A fish or a lamb.
4. Why was a fish used? *Ans.* A rebus was made of the Greek word, *ichthus*, meaning fish. Each letter was regarded as the initial letter of a word in the sentence, "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour." The early Christians used it to identify each other in days when they were in danger of persecution.
5. What does a lamb carrying a banner mean? *Ans.* The lamb of God with the banner of victory.
6. Why would a rose design be used in decorating a baptismal font? *Ans.* Because the rose represents, "Messianic Promise."
7. What is a nimbus? *Ans.* It is a circle of light surrounding the head of a holy person in artistic representation.
8. How are the four evangelists represented? *Ans.* Matthew as a winged man; Mark as a winged lion; Luke as a winged calf; and John as a winged eagle.
9. What do oak leaves represent? *Ans.* Strength, eternity.
10. What figures are used to represent eternal life or immortality? *Ans.* The butterfly and the peacock.
11. What is the meaning of the symbol, "IHS"? *Ans.* This is the abbreviation for the Greek word, *Jesus*.
12. Why are the doors of many churches arched? *Ans.* Because the arch symbolizes triumph.

Be sure to include in your quiz symbols which your audience will see in their trip through your church. It is time now for your treasure hunt. Take a quiet tour of the church guided by one who has studied the subject and can point out significant decorations. By this time the audience should be able to notice

many things themselves. Look for any triangles or three-sided figures. They represent the Holy Spirit or Trinity.

A star made of two inverted triangles signifies the Holy Spirit and is also the Star of David, the Hebrew emblem, used over the graves of Jewish soldiers instead of the cross. The dove also symbolizes the Holy Spirit. An open Bible in a stained-glass window represents the Word of God going into all the world. The cross is the most meaningful symbol of Christianity. What story does it tell? An anchor signifies faith. Clasped hands indicate fellowship. The crown speaks of the kingship of Jesus. The cross with the crown around it represents the suffering of Jesus as well as the fact that He is really a king. Everyone will find newly awakened interest in things they have looked at unseeingly for years.

One churchwoman never dreamed how enriching the study of symbols could be until she took it up in order to prepare a beautiful "gift of hands" for her church, St. Paul's Episcopal. She wanted to create a frontal in needlepoint, with designs used to be significant.

Since the frontal was for the Trinity season, she chose as her central figure the symbol of three fishes in a circle, representing the Trinity.

Six other figures across the top were a winged man (Matthew), crossed keys (Peter), the winged lion (Mark), the winged calf (Luke), the viper in the fire (Paul), and the winged eagle (John). In panels extending down from this border she used the butterfly, the lily, the rose, the descending dove, clasped hands, the ship (Jude), the bursting pomegranate, and others.

Having made her selections, she employed a stained-glass window designer to prepare the symbols in colored rectangular designs. These she copied in needlepoint and produced nineteen lovely rectangles which she finally combined with a fine green silk brocade and fringe.

You might put your study of symbolism into some such form as this. Or you could make a much simpler design, a decoration

for a pulpit Bible bookmark, perhaps. You will have to work out your own designs, as did this lady, as these patterns are not produced commercially.

Working out your own design employing symbolism awakens an awareness of the significance of this means of conveying religious ideas and beliefs. "Everywhere I look now," says this worker, "I see how symbols are used in art, architecture, and decoration of all sorts—things I never would have noticed before." And, though her symbolic needlepoint design involved much work, she feels she gained as much as she gave.

### "HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW?"

A clever idea for a program was submitted by the First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Alfred, New York. Each quarter when this church has its business meeting, it is preceded by a dish-to-pass supper and a table program. When the wife of the dean of Alfred University prepared the program, she rearranged the people so that the pastor, trustees, advisory board members, deacons and deaconesses, and church officers were seated together at one table. Sixteen teen-agers, members of her Bible class, lined up against the wall.

The dean's wife fired questions about the church to the "church experts" seated at the table, taking each person in turn. If one failed to answer promptly, the question was turned back to a teen-ager. These young people had been thoroughly coached in advance and knew all the answers. The discomfiture of the "church experts" who could not answer the questions or answered them incorrectly caused much merriment, all in the best of good spirit.

The questions, as seen by the partial list below, are more or less applicable to any church organization and building. The data memorized by the teen-agers was excellent foundation work for future church experts:

When was this church organized? Who was the first pastor? How many pastors has the church had? How many deacons and

deaconesses do we have? What is the function of the Advisory Board? What is the seating capacity of the auditorium? What is the outside capacity when chairs are added? How many windows are in the building?

How many memorial windows are there? How many overhead lights are in the ceiling? How many pipes in the organ? What is the significance of the arrangement of the red velvet curtains and carpet?

What was the total cost of our recent church improvement? What does the plaque on the organ say? What is the meaning of the plaque at the rear? Who made and presented the communion cloths? In whose memory were the silver candlesticks given? Who presented the Christian flag?

## C H A P T E R 9



### *Making Your Presentation of the Budget Interesting*

Ever hear of a budget that was interesting? This is the story of how one church made its budget presentation so graphic that members absorbed more facts and figures than they ever thought possible.

"What can we do about the budget—that dry, but oh, so vital, subject?" they asked themselves. "How can it be dramatized or enlivened?" They had noticed that figures presented in a verbal report never quite "sink in," no matter how carefully members listen.

Many members of this big-city church, Christ Methodist, in the heart of New York, were used to big-business methods, and they knew that figures presented visually are most apt to strike home. And so, with the help of an energetic committee, they set out to try this form of presentation at the annual anniversary dinner with which the budget campaign is launched each year.

Held in early November, in the church assembly hall, this pleasant family get-together is open to the entire membership. A prominent speaker is featured, and there is a little musical entertainment. The speaker talks about the church and what it is accomplishing in the community, but it is not a plea for funds. Pledge cards are distributed during the evening, and members are urged to fill them out and turn them in at the service next Sunday, called Consecration Sunday. For two weeks following

this Sunday, canvassers go out to any who have not yet turned in their pledge cards and, before Christmas activities begin, the coming year's financial picture is fairly well established.

With the new visual approach, statistics were compiled from church records and files and put into the form of pictorial graphs, pie-graphs, and charts, all done in attractive colors on 22" x 28" poster board. Other posters were worked out depicting various church activities. Photographs, many in color, taken by various church members who were camera enthusiasts, were enlarged to a uniform size of 8" x 10" for use on these posters. All these were set up on easels or hung about the walls of the assembly hall where the anniversary dinner takes place, and members were able to study them during the reception hour before dinner. Posters were placed so that those in line for the cafeteria service could read them consecutively as they moved along. And they remained on the walls throughout the two following weeks of the budget campaign. Everybody had fun pointing out friends and families in the pictures and finding his own likenesses there.

"The posters caused a great deal of interest and comment," said the church business manager. "There was greater comprehension of the church's needs and responsibilities. And," he added, "incidentally, they resulted in a much better response in pledges."

On a smaller scale any church could emulate this idea. All you need is an ambitious women's committee who will take charge of preparing the posters. Of course, you will need the assistance of a man or two, preferably someone experienced in working with statistics, who can prepare the figures which are to be worked out in graph and chart form. Once the facts and figures are organized, young people might like to do the necessary painting and lettering, with women to oversee the job and work out an effective display arrangement.

The New York church used these subjects for their various displays: An introductory poster read: "To carry out the program of our church and fulfill our budget obligations we need: 1. More subscribers to our budget. (Only —% of our members subscribed

to last year's budget.) 2. A more generous subscription from each giver. (Last year —% of our subscriptions were less than \$1 per week.) 3. A prompt end to the budget campaign. (Last year only —% of our subscribers made their gifts on Consecration Sunday.")

The next poster announced, "Here are our gifts to others." There followed several attractive posters with photographs of the church's missionaries at work in Japan and Cuba. Home missions were represented by activity pictures of the day nursery sponsored by the church.

Charts and graphs then presented in an effective way how the budget is used, dividing so much for the ministers, so much for the staff and maintenance of the church, so much for foreign and home missions and other activities.

Next came pictures of the staff under the heading, "These people keep our church running." Snapshots showed the minister in the pulpit, the minister of music at the organ, the religious education director at her desk, the church secretary, and so on.

Charts comparing today's costs with those of ten years ago pointed out how costs have risen and why a larger budget was needed. One chart listed steps of outstanding progress the church had made during the past ten years. A graph indicated the membership growth over the ten-year period, with fluctuating lines indicating new members and removals. Under the heading, "Growth of our church finance," the percentage of change in major budget items over the ten-year period was shown. "Income" headed the column in which the increase of subscriptions and plate collections was compared with the increase of the national income per person according to the Department of Commerce. "Outgo" headed the other column in which the rise in the cost of maintaining church, music, education, staff and world service was compared with the rise in the cost of living.

Other posters showed more photographs of church activities. Sunday-school toddlers, primary members and juniors were shown in class activities; teachers were photographed at a group

meeting. This was headed, "Training leaders for years ahead. Christian Education for all ages. Trained, skilled teachers; adequate classroom materials; modern teaching methods."

The Women's Society of Christian Service was shown in a meeting and presiding at a church supper. Also shown were photographs of the young women's Wesleyan Service Guild and the Business and Professional Women's Club.

Other charts followed announcing, "This year's budget is higher because these items are bigger: pulpit ministry, education, world service, secretarial and finance work, building maintenance, supplies." Under the title, "Where the money comes from," the amount which came in from each source the previous year was shown in pink and the amount hoped for this year in red. This listed plate collections, pew rents, endowment, Easter and communion offerings, and miscellaneous.

The final poster pointed out, "Timing your subscription is important. Last year for the budget only —% of our subscriptions came in on Consecration Sunday. The results were: uncertainties in planning for the year, a big burden on budget canvassers, long drawn-out campaign. This year make a subscription. Make your gift generous. Make your gift promptly."

Another way of presenting the budget would be to actually put your facts and figures on the stage. Sunday-school children and teen-agers, either in costume or without, could carry posters across the stage as the figures are read off by your treasurer.

For instance, a little boy dressed in clerical robes might carry in a card reading, "For the pastoral ministry \$oo is needed." Two little toddlers might come in sharing a poster that says, "For the Sunday school \$oo is needed." A teen-ager in foreign dress could carry a poster reading, "For our missions abroad \$oo is needed." A child carrying a basket of fruit might represent "Our missions at home." A youngster dressed as a carpenter or painter could show the need for maintenance funds, and so on. Let other children represent the various items of income. And for your final scene have both groups return to the stage together,

"outgo" figures on one side, and "income" figures on the other. The treasurer may then announce, "Our job is to make these groups balance."

There are many not-too-difficult ways of relieving the heaviness of a discussion of finances and drawing out members who usually stay away from these ordinarily less interesting sessions. With a little imagination you can work out a budget meeting that will hold your members' interest and be of lasting value to your church.

## C H A P T E R 1 0



### *What Makes Church News?*

A newspaper reporter once received a brief notice in the mail that a local church was going to celebrate its anniversary. The alert reporter telephoned the pastor and asked if there was anything more he could tell about the anniversary. For instance, what was going to happen?

The pastor thought a moment and said, "Well, my father is going to speak, but he comes from another city . . ." By a series of pertinent questions the reporter finally drew out of the pastor the fact that his father and four brothers, all ministers of their own churches, were going to be present for the occasion. The story seemed of such news importance that the newspaper sent out a photographer on the anniversary day, and took a photograph that made front pages in newspapers all over the country.

Not all reporters have time to dig out stories. The trouble is, church members don't realize what makes church news, and so they grumble and complain because they feel they are not getting co-operation from the press in publicizing their activities. Taking pains to learn what publications want and need will help you get results.

A good publicity or public relations chairman is essential to every well-organized church. In most instances a woman will be chosen, because she has more time to devote to the activity. Her job may be described as "relating, informing and influencing . . .": relating the public to her cause, informing the public about that cause and influencing the public to respond.

An effective publicity chairman must be aware of all the media at her disposal and put it to the best use, whether it be church bulletins, bulletin boards, telephones, posters, photographs, newspapers or radio. If enough work is involved, the chairman should divide it among as many committee members as needed to do the job well. The chairman should sit in on executive program committees, so that she will know and understand all that is being planned and be able to suggest features that will make programs most attractive.

Fortunate is the church with a publicity chairman who has had actual journalistic experience, particularly one who is willing to take time to bring out the colorful in the church news. But even without journalistic experience you can learn how to be successful in dealing with the press.

You can develop a nose for news that will get your church into the papers regularly and make it seem such an interesting church that strangers will seek it out. Learn to see possible news stories in commonplace occurrences. An elderly member who has missed only a few services in her lifetime, a farmer's family that came to service through a blizzard, workers at a church supper—all have possibilities for the kind of items editors are eager to get.

Photographs of church doings are much in demand, but only a few churches supply the kind newspapers are seeking. They don't want just mats of a coming evangelist, photographs of a new minister or new church; they want pictures that involve people rather than things or events—pictures that can be taken most any time. If you are blessed with a church member who can get a good clear print with his camera, you can guide him to take the pictures you need.

Suppose your church is one which has been growing at a good clip without any social projects or contests. It is the solid, permanent kind of growth every church wants, but unspectacular. At first glance a publicity chairman can see no story there. But *Christian Standard*, a national denominational publication, used a full-page picture story showing how good planning and lay

interest promotes permanent growth in just such a church. Eight pictures illustrated the article—one showing the greeting committee in the church doorway, another showing the way the men pitched in to clear the church grounds, a shot of the daily Vacation Bible school, and so on. When you get such a story as this, help boost the *esprit de corps* of the membership by ordering enough copies of the story so that one can be mailed with each copy of the next church newsletter.

If you have to deal with editors of small weeklies and dailies who are happy to have pictures to publish but often object to engraving costs, here's a solution: The church itself may pay for having the cut made (and this may be well worth the cost as advertising), and the publicity chairman may send the picture to a metropolitan daily, which will usually send the cut to the local paper after it has been used.

No matter the size of the city or newspaper, stories of church activities command wide attention and will be given ample space if rightly handled. A steady flow of interesting reports dealing with church activities can wield a powerful influence for the church.

Here are various things that make church news:

1. Election of officers (send their pictures, too).
2. Meetings, their themes, purposes, speakers, films or dramatic offerings.
3. Large state, area or national meetings which local people attend.
4. Special projects such as fund-raising affairs or plans for community services.
5. Distinguished guest speakers.
6. Your church's stand on current issues: Human and civil rights, universal military training, liquor advertising, etc.
7. Local action on any social problem.
8. Local and nation-wide observance of the World Day of Prayer, May Fellowship Day and World Community Day.
9. Personalities. This offers infinite scope: a migrant; an In-

dian; a rich person who gives time, self and money; an invalid who radiates spiritual strength; a youth with vision and courage; a college student off to the mission field.

But whatever you tell about, make it interesting. One church publicity person says, "I stand firmly against the cut-and-dried type of church publicity, not only because the editor thinks it's dull, but also because the reader thinks the church must be dull, too. I try to make all our church publicity sound as though the church itself is interesting, friendly, progressive and fun."

This woman gets extra space in the local papers for the church by digging up little one-paragraph human interest stories which an editor welcomes. One item concerned a letter from a missionary telling how twenty-five dollars sent by the Vacation Bible school helped build a new church. Another told of a seventy-eight-year-old member who contributed seventy-eight cents as her birthday offering. This developed into a story when she figured up how much she had given that way during the fifty-four years she had attended the church.

Your publicity chairman should first get acquainted with representatives of local newspapers with whom you will deal. She should familiarize herself with press deadlines and always make it a point to get material in well ahead. If there is no precedent for dealing with local radio stations, your chairman should get acquainted with the station manager and program director and inquire how and when publicity can be included. Listen to the local programs yourself. A program aimed specifically for women listeners might take a notice of the appearance of a women's organization speaker or a church bake sale. A program for children might consent to make a special announcement for your Sunday school.

Invite press and radio representatives to all public meetings, and send invitations or tickets for luncheons or dinners, too. See that newspaper personnel are seated next to someone who can give accurate answers to detailed questions. Provide them with a program, or any printed matter pertaining to the occasion.

News releases of coming events should be sent to newspapers

well in advance, and follow-up stories should be included in the issue immediately following the event. In some cases this may mean telephoning the story. Remember that news values deteriorate with time.

You may not have to be told the five essentials of a news story, Who, What, When, Where and Why, and that no matter what the length of the story, these five questions must be answered in the first paragraph, if not the first sentence. Vary the order if you like, but never leave any out. The most unusual "W," or the one of greatest interest to most readers, should be given first. Open your story with live words, which will immediately catch the interest of the reader.

Each of the following leads contains the five "W's" but which one makes you want to read more?

"The annual bazaar of the Community Church will be held at the Recreation House from March 10 to 15."

"Easter bunnies and spring flowers will brighten booths at the Community Church's annual bazaar to be held from March 10 to 15 in the Recreation House."

Type news stories double spaced, starting one-third of the way down the page to leave room for editors' notes, and with one-and-a-half-inch margins. Be sure your facts are carefully checked for accuracy, particularly the spelling of names. Initials or first names should always be given—not just "Mrs. Jones," but "Mrs. Quinton P. Jones." Nicknames usually sound odd and in poor taste when seen in print.

Humor has its place in church reporting, too. A newspaper once made a boxed feature out of a story about a three-year-old who at a Christmas program told her anxiously prompting mother, "Well, Mamma, you just come up here and say it!"

For information on how to do better publicity work, write for a copy of the manual *Leadership*, 60¢, from General Department of United Church Women, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York.

## C H A P T E R   1 1



### *Your Church Can Have a Junior Choir*

On the Sunday before Christmas forty-five angelic-looking youngsters march solemnly down the aisle of the Community Church at the Circle, Mount Vernon, New York, singing the processional. Faces glisten, hair lies smoothly, fresh white surplices are set off with stiff collars and flowing red bow ties. Sweet child voices lifted in song send a thrill through the listeners. And the women of the church sigh with satisfaction and admit it was well worth the effort it took.

For on the Thursday rehearsal days that precede each Sunday service the junior choir does not have quite so much the appearance of little angels. On Thursdays they are a collection of normally energetic youngsters, who have arrived at the church full of pent-up emotions after a day of school. They must be calmed enough to get the benefit of the training the choirmaster is to give them, or all is lost. Here is where the women of the church must take over.

Junior choirs are conducted with more or less success in many churches, but at the Mount Vernon church the secret is the co-operation the women have given the choirmaster. The choirmaster cannot be expected to do a good job of teaching music to youngsters if he has mechanical details such as discipline to attend to as well.

Would a junior choir be an advantage for your church? Here are some reasons why it might:

1. Churches supporting junior choirs seldom if ever have to

resort to paid singers for their choirs. Children of the church are gradually being trained for such work. The best possibilities of the young voices are brought out early and developed so that they provide a larger group of good singers from which to select the senior choir.

2. Youngsters are taught an appreciation of music in the church, which leads to a fuller understanding of the music when they attend church as adults, even if they don't continue in the choir.

3. Children learn discipline through going into the church to sing, learn to control themselves in public and keep restless bodies still for periods of time.

4. Children are encouraged to sing, and individual voices naturally improve. A child with a toneless voice learns to sing tolerably well through his eagerness to take part in the choir. Others discover they have voices which should be trained further for professional purposes.

5. The loveliness of innocent child voices always adds inspiration to a church service.

Granted you want such a choir in your church—what does it require? It requires at least a chairman and co-chairman who are willing and able to organize the work and to be present every rehearsal day and every Sunday. With the assistance of other mothers by turns, you can manage nicely. But two women are a minimum to handle approximately forty-five lively children.

Teaching of formations is easy, once patterns are established. For there are always some of the trained youngsters left to herd new recruits into line. Formations take continuous attention, however, as they must be changed to fill absences and adjust to new arrivals. Work out your formations according to the place your choir will occupy.

For instance, at the Community Church at the Circle, the junior choir leads the senior choir into the sanctuary. Boys come first, then small girls and older girls. These are followed by the older junior choir of high-school age and finally by the senior choir. They march in pairs according to height and are trained to keep

a certain length between each couple. Teaching choir members to march and sing at the same time requires patience and perseverance, as these two activities are difficult to co-ordinate.

The younger children are seated in the first two rows of pews in front of the pulpit, while the older ones go into the choir loft with the senior choir. Before the service two boys or girls from the choir come down the aisle to light the two three-branched candelabras on either side of the pulpit. When it is time for the anthem, the young children move up into formation in front of the pulpit, while the older ones come down from the choir loft. They sing the anthem along with the senior choir, taking the soprano part. No director stands before them to lead the young voices; they are trained to sing with only the organ as a guide.

During the service the chairman of the junior choir sits with them in the pews to keep order and attend to any emergencies that may arise. Mothers of the choir members take turns sitting at either end of the pews. Their presence is enough to insure quiet. Sometimes needed sheets of music have been left behind, or a handkerchief is required. The women smooth over all such rough spots.

It is up to each mother to keep the surplices of her own child spotless and fresh each Sunday. Four or five times a year the robes worn under them must be laundered. One year the junior choir sang for a Christmas pageant wearing stiff Eton collars and big red bow ties with their gowns. These proved so effective that red bows and stiff collars have since been worn each year for the three Sundays nearest Christmas and New Year's.

A preparatory class for the choir starts in May for all new children. (At the Mount Vernon church children must have reached the third-grade age.) They learn the responses for prayers first, and then hymns, and finally a simple anthem to be sung on Children's Day, when the new recruits make their first formal appearance with the choir. On this day the senior choir does not appear at all, and the junior choir sings the entire service alone from the choir loft. Others who have not sung before are gradually introduced into the choir as the months

pass, so that by Christmas the choir is complete for its effective presentation of the Christmas music.

For baptisms the junior choir sings the Brahms "Lullaby" alone, while the senior choir hums softly in the background.

It is up to the women, too, to offer the youngsters the little rewards and treats that make service in the choir not *all* work. At this particular church, cookies and milk are served every Thursday when the children arrive from school for rehearsals. And once a year there is a supper party.

The ladies have found that the invariable supper favorite of the younger set is spaghetti with meatballs. They may serve it with Waldorf salad or a relish tray, crisp rolls, ice cream and cookies. For entertainment there is a movie—preferably a Western—or an amateur night. A program of games is fun, but more strenuous for those in charge. And awards are given for faithful service in the choir and regular attendance at rehearsals.

The organist and choirmaster appreciates the work of the women; he realizes how much their help means. In the early days when the idea of a junior choir was newly proposed by the senior choir, it was up to the choirmaster to discipline the children as well as teach them to sing. Such a handful grew more and more difficult till one day he asked a friend who was a high-school principal to sit in on a rehearsal and advise him. After one session the friend explained that it was far too much for one individual to handle alone, and in addition, he said, the youngsters were probably hungry after school. Thus the ladies came into the picture. Harmony now reigns, although sometimes the ladies agree that two of them is none too many.

"It is surprising what children can do when you work with them," says the chairman. "Of course, at rehearsals there is always someone acting up and trying to be funny, throwing spitballs and so on, and sometimes I think I cannot live through another Thursday. But when Sunday comes, and they appear in church with all the proper dignity, I know it is worth while."

## C H A P T E R   1 2



### *Attacking Divorce on the Home Front*

"Joe doesn't like going out with people much. When I marry him, will I always have to stay home reading books?"

"My wife never gets up to make my breakfast. Isn't this part of her job?"

"Don't you think my husband should be willing to put his slippers away? He *insists* on leaving them beside the bed."

Trivial troubles! Yet they may be seedlings that grow into the ugly weed, divorce. There ought to be an adequate place for solving minor matrimonial crises, and more and more people are saying that the church is it.

Pick up almost any magazine or newspaper and you find columns of advice by "specialists" in marriage counseling. Why shouldn't preachers—by whom the marriages were solemnized—be giving help? Why shouldn't church groups frankly and understandingly work at the job of making and keeping homes happy?

Some churches are doing it already. More of them can help to smash divorce before it has a chance to get started.

"Laymen and ministers alike have not been as alert as they might to discern symptoms and learn how to deal with them effectively before they reach an advanced stage," says Reverend Herman L. Barber, Associate Pastor of the Marble Collegiate Church, New York City. "Mr.-and-Mrs. clubs, which make some discussion of marital counseling part of their yearly program, are helpful in encouraging parishioners to seek help."

Plenty of expert counseling is available through ministers, but people must be encouraged to seek it. Churches had better be showing individuals, *before* their marriage gets to the breaking point, where and when to ask for help.

Here is where your group comes in. Whether you are the Young Folks, the Young Adults, the Couple's Club, or the Women's Group, you can spark the organization of a program of education for family living, a marriage institute, or whatever you wish to call it. Tell your church, "We want to plan it and take the responsibility for getting people there."

Set up your committee in collaboration with the pastor, or a ministerial agency if more than one church is to take part. You may wish to provide and make available to your congregation a wide variety of wholesome literature on family relationships, or you may wish to promote a series of lectures by qualified speakers. The work of the committee will be to determine which subjects will be most interesting to the largest number of persons in the church, to arrange for speakers or literature, and to publicize the plan.

Is the greatest demand in your church for education in the problems of young married people, of newlyweds, or of more mature married people? It's best to choose one area to begin with; don't try to cover all areas at once. Each has such a completely different aspect that at least two or three lectures are necessary to accomplish anything. You will find that people do not begin to ask questions freely until the second or third lecture.

Greatest emphasis should be placed on the fact that these lectures are purely educational, and that everyone, no matter how happily married, can find helpful pointers in them. If the committee and all connected with promoting the plan are known to be happily married, it will give confidence to those who need help most. Give your program a title which doesn't focus on problems, but has a positive approach, such as "Building a Better Marriage."

Many times problems can be corrected through the information thus impersonally received. With systematic education on

marriage problems available to your membership, most problems never need to loom large enough to endanger a marriage. But when they do, if these lectures are providing correct information, your members will be ready to seek consultation from your minister quickly before the problem becomes acute.

"Such meetings reach many with ideas who would not otherwise be reached," points out a New York psychologist and marriage counselor. "If people can be made to see through a lecture or talk that differences in each other are normal and that they should accept them instead of fighting them, many more marriages could succeed. Youngsters often think, when something goes wrong, that they have chosen the wrong mate and had better look for another. Either education or experience must teach that a successful marriage is achieved through countless adjustments and a determination of both parties to make the marriage succeed, rather than by a perfect blending of natures."

You will need to convince your congregation that they need education in family living. You might make your first meeting a gathering to honor all your church members who have celebrated upward of forty years of married life. If there are too many of these (statistics tell us that marriages most likely to succeed are those between active church members), limit it to those who have had their golden weddings.

There is nothing more inspiring to young people embarking on married life than the gleam in the faces of those who have successfully weathered the storms together for many years. Let each couple on this occasion be prepared to tell in a half-humorous, half-serious way what the secret of their marriage success has been. Then your minister may bring a word of commendation, point out that the path of marriage is not always an easy one, and introduce your new marriage institute, expressing the hope that it may help more marriages to proceed along truly Christian lines and to last as happily as those which are being honored. Your program is launched.

As speakers, get authorities who know what they're talking about. There may be doctors or psychologists in your community

who are specialists in phases of marriage relationships. In a pre-marital program the problems of mixed marriages should certainly be emphasized, for more and more people are taking this unnecessary risk. Your minister would probably undertake this assignment, telling of the difficulties to be expected in a union with someone of another faith. He may also sit in on all your programs; after speakers have finished, if he feels it necessary, he can give the Christian motivation of what has been said.

It is best to get people out as couples, rather than as just one member of a pair. A fact strikes home better if both husband and wife hear it together than if one goes home and tells the other. Minor problems can be ironed out at a panel discussion or question-and-answer meeting under the guidance of a trained worker. Someone may get up and ask a question pertaining to an individual problem, and one or two seasoned members who have had a similar problem may tell how they have worked it out. The trained speaker can then enlarge on the point or clarify it. The more your meetings take on the air of an exchange bureau for marriage ideas, the better.

Groups in Norwalk, Connecticut, and Port Chester, New York, have experimented with such programs. One year the Young Adults of Memorial Methodist Church in Yonkers, New York, inaugurated what it called a "Courtship and Marriage Institute." Even with the difficulties this beginning project encountered, the sponsors felt it was well worth the effort and intend to promote it again.

The young pastor of this church came to a number of definite conclusions through this experiment. He feels that admission should be charged for the lectures, with everyone attending registering, as for a school. This overcomes embarrassment and makes it definite that all will attend the whole series. Lectures, he feels, should be limited to one particular group—teen-agers, non-married young adults, young married couples, or mature married couples.

Subjects covered at Memorial Methodist were: "How to Choose a Mate" and "How to Live with a Mate," by a psycholo-

gist, "Problems in Marriage," by a minister, and "Becoming a Parent," by a member of the local Planned Parenthood center.

The National Council of Churches publishes two manuals for the assistance of ministers, *Pre-Marital Counseling* and *Pastoral Counseling in Family Relationships*, by Leland Foster Wood.

Anthony DeMarinis, director of the Family and Children's Service of St. Louis, Missouri, who has had a good deal of contact with churches through the community, says, "The layman should become aware of the need of marriage counseling and realize the meaning of the high divorce rate; it's not just a matter of statistics to be quickly forgotten. He should become aware of the symptoms of marital problems and be so informed as to be influential in directing people to the proper resources for help."

It is high time the churches recognized that happy and lasting marriages, as well as beautiful weddings, are their responsibility. Perhaps you are the person who can help to point your own church to its clear duty.

## C H A P T E R   1 3



### *Start a Career Counseling Service*

Young Bill Jones had decided upon a career in engineering, and a well-meaning, though not very well-informed, friend had recommended Harvard. Bill's family was successful in getting him enrolled there, only to find Harvard has no engineering course!

Alice Smith hoped for a career as a housewife. Yet her parents felt she should be trained to earn a living, in case of necessity. Alice wondered if a course in home economics would fit her for both roles, or whether she ought to take up secretarial work, which she disliked.

Then there was John Black. He never had been able to make up his mind about anything. His father said he would not send him to college unless he had decided upon a career. But John didn't know what he was fitted for. Should he undertake to be a lawyer, or study aeronautics? Maybe it was safer to become a salesman in his father's insurance office.

"These are not my problems," I hear you say. "My children are grown." But think again. Isn't there something you as a group could do to help the youngsters in your church—and in your community—who are floundering hopelessly in their plans for the future?

In these days of specialization pupils in high school need help in making realistic educational and vocational plans. If there is no vocational guidance or placement counseling connected with your public schools—as is the case in many smaller communities—

your women's group might step in to help fill this crying need with a Career Investigation Bureau. Here's how to go about it.

A series of "Career Week" talks on various vocations and professions by successful business and professional people would enlighten young people as to the actual requirements and remuneration (spiritual as well as monetary) of different types of work in which they might be interested. Plan now to hold such a series in your church next fall, shortly after school opens.

Working in co-operation with the high school, you will want to first make a survey of pupils' preferences. Each student should list in order of importance three occupational fields in which he thinks he would be interested. He should also be asked to state if he intends to go to college, and list up to three colleges he might consider attending.

From these lists compile a list of interest groups for which you will obtain speakers. Subjects may include teaching, secretarial work, farming, retailing, nursing, electronics, journalism, etc. You may be able to secure your speakers from your church membership. If not, go to such local service organizations as the Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, or Business and Professional Women's Club. The Farm Bureau, Chamber of Commerce, local hospital and newspaper might also be good sources. Speakers will enjoy rendering this service to their community, and also having this opportunity to discover potential employees.

"Career week" at your church might consist of a number of meetings held throughout the week. Two or three groups may meet at the same time in different rooms of the church. Students should be allowed to sit in on as many groups as they like.

Allow approximately forty-five minutes for each session. This allows twenty minutes for the speaker to outline the educational and physical requirements for his particular job, and what return may be expected from it. At the end of this period there will be twenty-five minutes for students' questions. If it can be arranged with your speakers, make appointments for students who have shown a particular interest in a specific field to visit the industrial and professional representatives at their places of business.

for more detailed information and answering of more personal questions.

Such a career program may be continued over a period of years. If this is done, pupils could have a chance to meet with a speaker representing at least two different occupational fields each year. When a pupil has an opportunity to listen to and question speakers in eight different occupational areas during his four high-school years, he should know pretty positively which direction he wishes to take by the time he leaves high school.

A follow-up to this series of talks by qualified speakers would be a College Conference for those youngsters expecting to take up any post-high-school training, from a two-year course in nursing, secretarial work, or technical school to a full college course. Tabulate the college interests of the youngsters in your high school from the same survey you made of their vocational interests. Many colleges, particularly those nearby, will send representatives to talk to groups of young people.

A Military Career Day is another possibility. This should be limited to juniors and seniors, both boys and girls, and should cover the laws and requirements for military service, extending into opportunities for educational and vocational training while serving in the armed forces. Your local recruiting office will help you here.

Your Career Investigation Bureau may lead to something similar to an employment agency. Local stores, individuals, and even large companies in the vicinity will probably apply to you for part-time workers. Part-time employment enables many a youngster, who would not otherwise be able, to finish his high-school education, and you may be the go-between in putting these young people in contact with employers who need girls or boys to do counter work, shop work, baby sitting, office or household work. An opportunity to work in a field he hopes to enter helps crystallize a young person's thinking as to whether that is the job he really wants.

Setting up an occupations file is another way your group could be of service in connection with your local high school. A val-

uable aid to this is the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles*, published in three volumes by the United States Department of Labor and available from the Superintendent of Documents for approximately \$5. This breaks down all types of jobs and areas where such jobs can be found, and is fascinating reading as well. Your group might contribute this book to the school.

Free occupational materials are available from most of the large companies, such as General Motors, General Electric, American Steel, American Locomotives, Palmolive-Peet-Colgate, General Foods, and so on. These brochures describe the jobs these companies offer and the training required for them, and should be kept in your files.

You will also want to order catalogs from as many colleges and specialty schools as possible. Prospective students can then find out which school has the best program in a selected field. Your contacts with the colleges will also enable you to compare their opportunities for spiritual development, and to include this information for students' guidance.

Make your plans this summer, so that next year's graduates will leave high school better informed to take their places in society as useful citizens. Yours will be a gratifying task.

Other booklets that will be useful to you in this work are available from Science Research Associates, Inc., 57 West Grand Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. They cost 40c each, or three for \$1. Titles include: *Choosing Your Career*, *Discovering Your Real Interests*, *Getting Job Experience*, *How to Get THE Job*, *Our World of Work*, *School Subjects and Jobs*, *What Employers Want*, *You and Unions*, *You and Your Mental Abilities*, *Your Personality and Your Job*, *You and the Draft*, *Exploring the World of Jobs*.

## C H A P T E R 1 4



### *Adult Hobby Projects for Your Church*

What is your group doing for people over thirty-five?

Churches have for years recognized a need for extra activities for young people, but assumed that preaching was sufficient for the older groups. Nowadays workers are being pensioned earlier than ever before. Many folks with time and energy on their hands are looking for worth-while pursuits, particularly something with the social aspect of working in a group. Is your woman's society aware of this need? By supplying it you can do a valuable service for the community and ally your older members more closely with their church.

In order to give you some ideas for adult education programs you might develop, the work of several churches in this field has been investigated. In most cases where any attempt at adult education has been tried, the projects are still in formative stages. But a definite demand for such programs has sparked their inception and is causing them to progress steadily.

Christ Church, Methodist, in the heart of New York City, has a program called the "University of Life." The name, but not the exact program, was adopted from a plan inaugurated at the Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota. The program is divided into Friday evening hobby groups and Sunday evening "interest" groups. So popular has this program been that it has continued through the summer months.

Beginning in 1946 with only a few subjects, the "University of Life" has been enlarged each year to satisfy new demands.

The program is managed by one of the church's three ministers and a paid director of religious education. The central idea is to help the members link all their interests with the church, so that the church may include the "whole life of man." Although a congregation gathers before the altar Sunday mornings for worship, many varied outside interests would tend to draw the individuals apart. By bringing these outside interests into the church the individual finds there all he needs.

The Friday evening program at Christ Church is divided into two parts. From 7 to 9 P.M. hobbyists separate into thirteen groups, according to interests. From 9 to 11:30 P.M. there is a recreation period with refreshments, games, and "mixer" activities. Some persons come for the hobby meetings, others for the recreation period; some stay through both.

The director recommends that a charge be made for classes of instruction, even if the program could be carried on without it. Christ Church has tried both ways, and has found that attendance is far better when tuition is charged. Fee for a ten-lesson term is \$4. Most of the hobby groups are headed by church members who have taught the particular subjects or are expert enough at them to do so. Their services are donated. For language classes—conversational, elementary, and advanced French, elementary, and advanced Spanish, and elementary Italian—teachers are hired from a language school.

Instruction is offered in art, both water color and oil, ceramics, and photography. There is a drama workshop which presents several plays during the year. Public speaking is taught, with emphasis on using the voice with confidence. There are music and book appreciation groups. To be included in the program a subject must have at least ten applicants. Leatherwork and German were offered, but did not attract enough interest.

On Sunday evening, following vespers services and supper, there is a fellowship hour of singing, with outside singers coming in occasionally for solo numbers. At 7:30 the group divides into five "interest" (or age) groups—high school, 18 to 24 years, young adults from 25 to 35, adults (over 35), and a Bible class

including all ages. These groups meet for an hour and a half for discussion of various subjects suggested by the church's board of education, which submits a program guide. With groups thus formed your whole church is ready, whenever desirable, to do something for social action.

Topics to be discussed one year included: "The challenge of Christ Church to its member groups," "The obligations of Christ Church to its member groups," "The Christian Church: Puzzling questions about what the Church stands for in regard to political, social and world problems," "Problems of Christian living," and "The Methodist Church."

During the summer months a summer activities committee takes over in the absence of the paid director. Such a committee formed of members of your group could easily handle adult education activities in your own church. Your classes could be chosen on a basis of teachers available from your church membership, and subjects most in demand in your locality. You might have cooking classes for men and women, carpentry, household repair work, weaving, knitting, or most anything. Some smaller churches start with one class, and branch out when the need arises.

The parents' group of West Center Congregational Church, Bronxville, New York, has for five years sponsored an adult exercise course, which has proved very popular. Here there are regular groups in religious education for adults and forums from time to time with special speakers. West Center plans a Lenten program series with five Wednesday night meetings and discussion groups on current events, the Bible, parents and church-school teachers and mental hygiene.

At Asbury Methodist Church, Crestwood, New York, an artist-member recognized the community's desire for art classes, and, with the co-operation of two fellow artists, he formed L'Atelier, "the studio workshop of Westchester." A contribution is made to the church for use of the parish house three nights a week. On one evening a class in water-color painting is held, on another, oil painting, and on a third, interior decoration. The

wife of the artist who began this project is a member of her church's board of education, which is working with older people, particularly widows, widowers, and those who live alone. Their common interest in art gives these folks a wonderful outlet, and this group is thinking of promoting the art program as a church project.

## C H A P T E R 1 5



### *Enlarge Your Hymn Repertoire*

Suppose expert judges were to visit the churches of your community and appraise the congregational singing. Could you be sure your church would rate high in interpretation, intonation, devotional fervor, enunciation and tone quality? Or would you be afraid that unless the hymn were one of those few familiar ones, the singing might drop almost to a murmur, leaving the organ or the trained choir to carry on alone?

Then here's a worth-while project for your group. Stimulate interest in your hymns and their meaning among yourselves, and your enthusiasm is bound to carry on to the rest of the congregation. During the coming year why not make a comprehensive study of your church hymnal? Get acquainted with its contents; learn something of the interesting historical background and interpretation of the hymns; and especially, become familiar with a large number of tunes you were never quite sure of. Then you can sing out heartily in church, helping those about you to follow more easily.

"Women can be of great assistance to the minister in encouraging the learning of new hymns, and promoting the appreciation of them, not just as tunes, but as words with meaning," says one minister.

This man took steps to enlarge his congregation's hymn repertoire. Small groups met in homes for the singing of unfamiliar hymns and study of their meaning. Later everyone was invited to

attend an evening hymn sing in the church. Refreshments served after the singing made it a social occasion.

At the Elyria church the minister of music created interest in hymns by experimenting with unusual organ effects. When the hymn was a familiar one, and the singing strong, he often stopped the organ and let the voices carry the music alone.

At another church a "Hymn of the Month" campaign was carried out for a year and found interesting and helpful. The plan was to choose a hymn for use at every church meeting during the month, including worship service. The first Sunday of the month the minister used the hymn as the basis of his communion meditation. The words of the hymn were printed in the church calendar.

These are methods ministers have used to help encourage better hymn singing, knowing well the embarrassing muteness of the congregation when a hymn is selected which nobody can sing. You can relieve your busy pastor of this added task by carrying out his ideas within your own group. After a few meetings on hymns you will be able to surprise and delight him with the improved effect at services.

You could base a whole year's study program on hymns, their authors and composers. Assign two or three unfamiliar hymns from your hymnal to two or three members for each meeting. Let them look up the background, interpretation and authorship of those hymns and present a brief talk on them.

While the story of the hymn is fresh in everyone's mind, sing it through two or three times with piano accompaniment. Don't let anyone shy out of this, pleading that her voice is not good enough. Tell her she'll be surprised what a little practice will do. And every voice is good enough to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord." At the close of your meeting, sing all the chosen hymns through once again, so that you feel well acquainted with them.

Inform your minister of which hymns you are working on, so that he may have an opportunity to include them in his services at his earliest convenience, and enable you to sing them

with the full congregation and organ. Or, you might ask in advance what hymns he would particularly like to have you learn.

For the end of the year plan a bang-up musical evening to which the whole congregation will be invited. This is when your group will have an opportunity to demonstrate how much you have learned during the year. Use the hymns you have been studying as a basis. Let some of your members, or your minister, read brief extracts culled from the explanatory notes you made during the year's study.

Your group could then sing one hymn as it should preferably be sung. Afterward, you should return to seats in the auditorium so that you can help when the unfamiliar tune is sung.

It is a good idea to have one or more assisting instrumentalists to support the organ as accompaniment for this hymn singing. A cornetist, especially, will hold the singers together. Or a trumpet stop on the organ will give somewhat the same effect. However, this should not be overdone, but used only for certain stanzas.

There are a number of excellent source books on the subject of hymns, which you can use in looking up their history and significance, and biographical data about their authors. Your local library can probably supply you with some books from the list given at the end of this article.

*The Gospel in Hymns* by Prof. Albert Edward Bailey, published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1950, \$6, is a splendid reference for your purposes. It gives a comprehensive history of the greatest hymns from early times to the present day—including more than three hundred. Each hymn is discussed in detail. The historical, religious and social environment out of which each grew is described. Interesting facts are related about the authors and the circumstances under which the hymns were written.

The hymns discussed in this book were chosen from ten different hymnals by committees of ten denominations. Hymns found in six of the hymnals were chosen for special study, and a few

others were added for special reasons. This was done to make this hymnary ecumenical in its scope. The hymnbooks from which these choices were made are: Anglican (Canadian), *The Hymn Book*, 1938; Baptist, Disciples, *Christian Worship*, 1941; Congregational Christian, *Pilgrim Hymnal*, 1935; Episcopal (U.S.), *The Hymnal*, 1940; United Lutheran, *Common Service Book*, 1918; Methodist, *The Methodist Hymnal*, 1939; undenominational, *New Church Hymnal*, 1937; Presbyterian, *The Hymnal*, 1937; Anglican (English), *Songs of Praise*, 1931; United Church of Canada, *The Hymnary*, 1930.

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P A R T   I I



*For Fun and Fellowship*



## C H A P T E R   1 6



### *All in favor of Picnics . . .*

Remember the church picnics of your childhood? Children shrieking merrily as they chased one another in and out among the trees . . . mothers in fresh flowered percales gathered around the outdoor fireplace and picnic tables . . . fathers organizing ball games or pitching horseshoes. And when you were called to eat, there was the serving table groaning with good things. All the sandwiches that had been brought, all the hot dishes and salads, all the wonderful pies and cakes, were spread out for people to help themselves.

But these days the question is asked: "Shall we have a church picnic this year, or not?" Many churches have grown so large that a church-wide picnic becomes a mammoth undertaking and involves a crowd too unwieldy for group fun and good fellowship. It ends with each family taking a separate table at the park and eating their own lunch, almost as they would if they went to any park on any busy week end. True, games help to bring folks together, but usually the mothers are tied to the park tables with their burden of lunch, finding no more fellowship than they would serving a meal at home. Shy children and timid young people who would benefit most by participation in games are often too overwhelmed by the crowd to enter in. And so, one of the best promoters of fun and fellowship in the church—the picnic—is being dropped.

What can we do about this? Let's see how churches that are still giving picnics are solving this problem. Their ideas may

help you decide whether to hold a picnic again, and, if so, what type will best suit the needs of your group.

Churches in smaller communities do not have this problem. Picnics of not more than two hundred persons are usually successful in building fellowship and community spirit. But there is a difference in the way they are handled. A small organization of three hundred members noticed a significant contrast in the type of picnic held. Although their groups never numbered more than a hundred, there had been a steady decline in interest in the picnics since they gave up eating together and asked members to bring their own box lunches.

When a newly formed group, the Mothers' Club, undertook to prepare and serve a simple lunch at the picnic instead of asking families to bring their own, interest revived. The day before they met in the church kitchen and prepared a tasty potato salad. Standing overnight allowed the salad to blend thoroughly for better flavor. Other members of the group arranged for frankfurters to be roasted at the picnic, buns, ice cream, pop, and milk. Said the chairman: "We all like this kind of picnic far better. When people brought their own lunches, they went off by themselves to eat. The crowd didn't mix well, and not so many came. Lots more interest has been expressed in our picnic when we eat together."

One church feels the main purpose in its picnic, as in all its functions, is to evangelize the community. Members are urged to bring friends so that more may be reached with the Word. They count on 200 to 250 attending, and their method of providing lunch for all is worth mention. They always go to the same park where they are sure of a satisfactory water supply, a playground, and fireplaces. The Sunday-school staff comprise the committee. A man is put in charge of games, another takes care of properties for the races, and two women plan the refreshments—sandwiches, pop, ice cream and cake. Everything possible is homemade. The chairmen make out lists of names and assign two dozen sandwiches to each woman. Others are assigned two dozen pieces of cake. They figure two or three sandwiches per

person; varieties are: chopped eggs, tuna and pickle, and cream cheese on raisin bread—these have proved most popular. Everyone is asked to sit down together on the ground, so that none will go off and eat by themselves. Sunday-school young people pass sandwiches on large trays, and serve soda pop and cokes from tubs of ice.

While all are still seated, there is group singing to an accordion or a portable organ. Then a visiting evangelist gives a twenty-minute inspirational talk in simple terms that even children may grasp.

✓ Games are carefully planned to include everyone. They begin with young and old together lining up for a race and end with a tug of war with everybody tugging. In between are contests for every age group. "Balloon bat" is an unusual stunt. Balloons are tied to boys' backs and opponents swat the balloons with rolled-up newspapers until they break. Another favorite is blind-folding couples and having them feed each other ice cream.

Other churches which have an average attendance of one hundred at their picnics do not attempt to serve more than certain "extras," allowing families to bring their own picnic baskets. Most picnics are all-day affairs, so food must be provided for two meals. One idea is to supply ice cream, milk, and homemade lemonade. The men of the church gather in the church kitchen the night before and squeeze the juice to be mixed at the picnic. Another idea is to furnish chocolate milk, coffee, and ice cream, and provide frankfurters, hamburgers and marshmallows for roasting over open fires. Ice cream and fruit punch may be served during the afternoon, preferably right after the games.

✓ Plans for games and entertainment vary, but most of them follow the familiar pattern—baseball, group singing, obstacle races and contests for groups of all ages, with simple awards such as ribbons, candy bars, balloons, or whistles. If you wish to go to a park where a beach and swimming are available, Sunday-school teachers should be responsible for their own classes of children while on the beach, unless children are ac-

accompanied by parents. You may arrange for free activities in the morning and organized games in the afternoon. Stilts are good equipment to provide for children's activities. Homemade sledges on small runners are fun for children to play with and can be used as props for races. Chariot races on the sledges, with one child pulling another, are fun. Endeavor to get everyone to help and take part, enlisting anyone who seems to be unoccupied or left out to pass food. Camera fans can have a field day and make their pictures available to all later.

Another church handles three hundred persons successfully for an all-day picnic, not attempting, however, to furnish more than ice cream and coffee. Their "peanut scramble" is a good game for small children. Taking the children in groups according to age, they toss a pail of peanuts into the air, and let them see how many they can retrieve. Six to eight pounds of peanuts are provided for this. The same idea may be carried out with dry beans, keeping tiny tots occupied for long periods.

An interesting setup has been worked out by a large church. They do not try to have an all-church picnic, but hold a series of smaller ones. Their chapel picnic, largely for children, usually has an attendance of two hundred. Each brings his own lunch, and they go to a different place each year—an amusement park, a sightseeing boat, or to state or city playgrounds.

An elaborate pot-luck picnic is given by the Mothers' Club of the same church, generally in the yard of a member's home. They invite other groups in the church from time to time, making the attendance come to a little under one hundred. The picnic is scheduled from 6:30 to 10 P.M. No children is the rule. Programs are of adult interest, featuring movies, music, or a speaker on religious education. Japanese lanterns make the lawn festive, and a campfire and singing close the affair.

For the pot-luck supper each lady trots out her most special recipe, and the menu may include clam pie, India rice, tomato-soup salad and similar delicacies. Everyone brings enough of any dish for her family plus four. A committee polls members to find what they would like to bring, and if too many plan one

thing, a few are asked to change. If there is an outdoor fireplace, they may have a steak roast. One year two members prepared cream puffs for the whole crowd. They do not use the hostesses' kitchen, but eat from paper plates and cups and take home their soiled casseroles.

Other picnics in the same church are given by the Young Adult Forum, ages eighteen to thirty-five, and the Westminster Fellowship group of high-school age. The choir holds its picnic on the church grounds.

Another large church has an effective way of handling its two thousand picnickers. It hires a Hudson River excursion boat for the day. All take their own box lunches, and parents are depended upon to supervise their own children. Sunday-school children receive free tickets; others pay their own fare. No games or entertainment of any kind are planned, but in the isolated and leisurely progress of a river-boat ride many church families have opportunities to make friends out of acquaintances.

## C H A P T E R 1 7



### *Plan Your Picnic Wisely*

Care and forethought in making preparations will insure a happier church picnic this summer. Here's an idea for selecting an alert picnic committee: Make up your committee from specialists in a wide variety of fields.

A Boy Scout leader will know how to talk baseball with the boys and will be a nature authority. A member of the city council or some other civic group will know how to draw out political discussions among the men. A librarian, decorator, or fashion stylist, can always appeal to women and girls, and a schoolteacher will know how to organize play for the children. Be sure a housewife is chosen to direct food preparation.

Choose a convenient time for the majority, and a location that will be easy to reach, where you will be sure of comfortable seats and adequate table space, good drinking water and comfort facilities. Plan games, stunts and contests that will take in all those attending. While the group is gathering, all may participate in a nature quiz. Provide paper and pencils and let guests try to identify leaves, weeds and flowers. This may even take the form of a hike or "bird watch."

A garden contest, to be conducted by your civic representative, is amusing for the adults. Choice produce from individual gardens, whether fruits, flowers or vegetables, may be brought and arranged for show on one of the tables. Let judges decide the best.

Let your schoolteacher and Boy Scout leader be in charge of

games. Organized contests should be planned for small children, juniors, intermediates, young people, and adult men and women. Provide several kinds of game equipment to encourage informal play. If your church has a picnic kit, this will be easy. Many churches borrow or rent one from the city department of recreation, but it would be helpful to invest in that which is used most often and gradually build up a picnic kit of your own. This kit may include softball and bat, horseshoes, and pegs, quoits, beanbag board and bags, tug-of-war rope, sacks for races, eggs (wooden) and spoons for races, soccer ball, volley ball and net, and Indian clubs.

A clean-up stunt will make a game out of the work after supper. Write all the chores to be done on slips of paper and let everyone draw lots, thus mixing groups. After dark, a council-ring around a bonfire and community singing makes for fun and fellowship.

Here are some games and contests suitable for picnics:

1. If you are in charge of a car- or bus-load of kiddies going to the picnic, you will find your task easier if you plan some games. Divide your group into two teams and assign to one team the right-hand side of the road and to the other the left. The teams count cows, winning one point for every cow seen and five points for an entirely white one. Whenever a member of one team sees on his opponent's side of the road a graveyard, or any other special thing agreed upon in advance, all the opponent's points are canceled. A total of 100 or 150 points may be agreed on as "game." Repeat the contest after one side has won until the players tire of it. Another game is to watch billboards for letters of the alphabet in succession. Play this game as you would a spell-down. The first player is responsible for finding an A, the second for seeing a B and so on. The side that finishes first wins.

2. Guessing contests are popular to keep early arrivals at the picnic busy while others are assembling. They may guess the number of seeds in a watermelon, the weight of a cake or a homemade loaf of bread, or the number of stitches in a seam.

If baseballs and bats are supplied, a game will probably go on during most of the day. Quoit games, croquet-ball bowling, horse-shoes and pegs, and similar games are useful.

3. A woodland scavenger hunt similar to the door-to-door variety is fun. Make out lists of nature specimens to be brought in by the players from the nearby woods—a pine cone, a piece of moss, a white stone, a bird feather, maple leaf, acorn, plant fungus, toadstool, etc.

4. Moving pictures after dark will provide a special attraction if there is a source of electricity available. Films featuring community singing would be useful in getting group singing started.

5. Make a few humorous selections such as the largest family present, family with most redheads, family coming the farthest distance, youngest and oldest present, couple married longest time, couple married shortest time, oldest automobile, lowest automobile license number. Small amounts of homemade baked goods, jellies and jams would make nice prizes for these. Expensive prizes lead to difficulties, so make your prizes simple, particularly for the children.

6. Never ask adults to perform unusual physical feats. Plan walking relays for them, humorous stunts, such as letting men design hats for their wives out of a variety of materials which are provided, or anything else that is not too strenuous.

## C H A P T E R 1 8



### *Give a Wedding Anniversaries Party*

Celebrating wedding anniversaries is something the best-intentioned of us often forget to do. Why not give a fun-filled party at your church to mark these occasions?

Invite everybody to come and celebrate their anniversaries at an all-church supper. Appoint a hostess for each table who will be in charge of decorations, entertainment and organization. Couples should make reservations for the party well in advance and accompany each reservation with their wedding date, so that you can plan your tables accordingly.

If the number permits, devote one table to the paper anniversary theme, including those about to celebrate this first anniversary or who have recently done so. If there are not enough young people, include at one table all those who are celebrating their first, second, third or fourth anniversary; at another those from the fifth through the tenth; at another those from the eleventh through the fifteenth, and so on.

Hundreds of amusing decoration ideas will assail a hostess. You might offer prizes for the best tables, holding a "preview" before guests sit down, and giving everybody a slip of paper on which to mark his choice for first, second and third place. Have a ballot box handy and a committee to count the votes as soon as everyone is seated for supper. Prizes may be awarded during "speech time." Hostesses might plan entertaining guessing games as conversation starters.

A nice closing gesture would be for your minister to ask each

couple to join hands while he repeats the marriage vows. This will serve as a precious reminder of what was promised on that special day.

Here are some ideas to get your decorations started:

*Paper anniversary (first):* Use paper tablecloth, plates, napkins, even paper forks and spoons. For the centerpiece place a bright candle inside a large hurricane lamp and bank it with fluffy funny-paper flowers. Make these flowers by cutting discs of three different sizes out of the comic sheets. Fit together a disc of each size, stitch in the center, then twist the middle and turn back edges to form a rosette. Chains made of colored comic paper could be draped around the border of your tablecloth. For place cards cut out tiny Japanese lanterns and tie cards showing guests' names to the handles. Or use chain paper dolls for place cards, girl dolls for the women, boys for the men. Twist lace-paper doilies from the center to form a cornucopia or cone, tie with a ribbon bow and fill with mints or salted nuts. Or make crepe-paper figures of bride and groom as a centerpiece.

*Cotton anniversary (second):* Use a pretty piece of colored gingham or percale for your tablecloth. (You can make it into a dress later.) Cut flowers and gay designs from scraps of cotton fabric and paste them to place cards. For favors twist inexpensive cotton handkerchiefs into the shape of blossoms. Tie with green ribbon to resemble leaves. Cut a sturdy branch from a tree in your yard or buy a gnarled Ming tree branch at your florist's. You can either paint the branch or leave it in its natural state. Fasten it securely to a flat board base, or an interesting slab cut from a natural log, bark and all. Attach your handkerchief nose-gays to it as blossoms.

*Wooden anniversary (fifth):* Use a wooden salad bowl filled with curly wood shavings for your centerpiece. Make a number "5" out of wood and stand it in the center of the bowl. Around the bowl arrange wooden alphabet blocks to spell out "Happy Anniversary." Small wooden boxes can be used to hold candles, if you can't locate wooden candlesticks. Make place cards of bits

of birchbark, or tiny pieces of wood from the lumber mill, where scrap cuttings are available free.

If you are really ambitious, you might cut little wedding bells out of cigar-box wood with a jig-saw. Or each person's place card might be one part of a jig-saw puzzle, which the group puts together during supper. For favors try pencils, rulers or folding yardsticks, wooden spoons, boxes of matches or toothpicks, name or initial brooches or tie pins carved from wood.

Other possibilities: As a centerpiece, a log cabin made of children's blocks set on a bread board with bits of flowers and greens stuck into a border of plasticine. Clothespins dressed as brides and grooms, fastened upright to place cards. A tiny twig from a tree with a place-card ribbon tied to it. Wooden beads or empty spools strung on bright yarn to make a garland for the table. Wooden picture frames at each place, into which guests insert snapshots of themselves as bride and groom. (Ask them in advance to bring some.) Matches in your cake in lieu of candles. Real Dutch wooden shoes overflowing with flowers.

*Tin anniversary (tenth):* Use tin pie pans as plates and cake pans as serving dishes, a cookie sheet for a platter, even tin cups to drink from. Thoroughly scrubbed sardine cans with the tops left just as they are rolled back make surprisingly attractive holders for fat candles. For your centerpiece turn a large tin funnel upside down and stick real or paper flowers in the small end. Tie a big ribbon bow around it, and tuck a crepe-paper ruffle underneath the funnel. Tiny tin cans, such as those sandwich spreads come in, or small tin moulds make good nut cups. Cut the round ends from tin cans and glue nut cups to them. Write names on the tin with nail polish. Or cut tiny pots, kettles and pans from tin foil and paste to the place cards. Favors may be tin horns or whistles and various kinds of tin cookie cutters.

Canned goods in several sizes and shapes, with a few flowers, can be clustered in interesting arrangements to make both your centerpiece and your favors.

*Crystal anniversary (fifteenth):* Borrow someone's collection of glass paperweights and use them to encircle any centerpiece you

may choose—gardenias floating in a crystal bowl, a fishbowl turned upside down over a bunch of flowers, or a replica of Cinderella's glass slipper. Favors may be individual lapel vases with a bud in each, tiny bottles of perfume, or fragile glass animals. Little pocket mirrors can be used for place cards. Write on them in nail polish or crayon. Or simplify your table with the glass jar-and-bottle theme, using interesting jars filled with flowers for your centerpiece, bottles to hold candles, and jars of jelly, jam or honey at each place for favors. Paste on guests' names in place of labels, and these can double as unique place cards, too.

*Silver anniversary (twenty-fifth):* Gather together your best silver dishes, candlesticks and bowls to make this table appropriately beautiful. A "ship of happiness" sailing on a mirror sea, or a sundial, "I only mark the hours that shine," can be your centerpiece. Surround either with a cloud of frothy white ostrich plumes, bought at the dime store or millinery department. For support stick them into plasticine stuck under your mirror centerpiece in such a way that the feathers seem to curl out from under it. Lay a fresh white rose at each place for a favor. Place cards may be decorated simply with a silver ribbon bow, and festoons of Christmas tinsel may give sparkle to the white table-cloth. Or decorate your table entirely with silver bells of every size and type.

*Golden anniversary (fiftieth):* Make this a "pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow" theme. Cut a half circle of cardboard long enough to extend the length of your table center. Paste on cardboard supports in such a way that the half circle will stand upright on the table, forming an arch. Fringe strips of rainbow-colored crepe paper and paste them to the cardboard. Camouflage the ends of the rainbow with clusters of yellow and white flowers and greens. Cover a bean pot with gold paper and tie around the top gold cellophane ribbon. Fill the pot with souvenir pieces of wedding cake wrapped in gold paper and ribbon. Over the tablecloth sprinkle chocolates wrapped in gold paper to look like gold coins.

If this table includes those celebrating a number of different anniversaries, let the place cards tell the story. Out of gold paper cut two wedding rings entwined, or draw two golden wedding rings on plain place cards. Write on the card the anniversary date as well as the name of the individual. Or cut out two overlapping "hearts of gold" from gold paper and paste to place cards. Dime-store gold jewelry may serve as favors.

## C H A P T E R   1 9



### *Quilting Bees for Fellowship*

Is hand quilting becoming a lost art? Once many churches had women's groups who did fine quilting. Today, it is almost impossible to find such a group.

As you fly down the modern highway that borders the Mississippi River, you might easily slip right past the little community of Buffalo, Iowa. But if you are "in the know," you will draw up in front of its general store and post office which still have a definite look of frontier days about them. The hollow clack of your feet on the boardwalk before its doors reminds you of covered wagons and pony express.

In the post office you will be directed to the homes of some of the older residents who live on the unpaved streets leading back from the river. Here life goes on in the leisurely manner of a community that long ago stopped growing. Changes are slow in coming, and the art of quilting is still being pursued by a group of seven ladies, the survivors of a once vigorous Ladies' Aid Society consisting of twenty-five members of the Union Church. For years this group has met twice a month for quilting, and the beautiful work that has grown from their fingers is to be found in every home as well as in many neighboring communities.

Friendships formed through this working together have been firm and lasting, and have bridged the gap left by the passing of loved ones.

Younger women of the Society prefer to make rag rugs as

their contribution. They complain that there are too many needle pricks with quilting, and it takes too long to complete the work. Each year on Armistice Day the group gives a chicken supper and bazaar at which they sell the rugs and quilts they have made, clearing enough to keep up the small Ladies' Aid building adjoining the church, furnish fuel, and make needed repairs and improvements.

In addition the group does quilting for outsiders who piece their own tops but have not the facilities or time to quilt them, and do not want machine quilting.

We moderns are coming to discover we are not as sophisticated as we might think. Many of the customs which formed an integral part of American pioneer life—weaving, hooked-rug making, town-hall meetings, square dancing—are enjoying a vigorous revival. Why not quilting, too?

The old-fashioned quilting bee grew out of the need for companionship of lonely women, isolated by long distances and never-ending household tasks. Today other isolations keep women lonely even in crowded cities. Households no longer include parents, children, aunts, uncles, grandparents and servants in one interdependent group, and many a woman spends the greater part of each day alone in a small apartment with little human contact. There are lonely women in business too, who, after a day enclosed in a boxlike room, return to a silent apartment or room for the evening.

A hobby or other constructive activity is a boon to women like this; yet it is not enough. An opportunity to commune with her fellow beings is even more imperative. Quilting provides for both needs. Why not organize a quilting club in your church, as an adult education program? Before this art is altogether lost, rally the few oldtimers in your community who know about it and get them to teach others.

To test the interest such a program would create before embarking on the project, you might hold a "quilt show." This will also stir up the necessary enthusiasm to start things moving. Col-

lect all the hand-quilted coverlets you can unearth in your community, and put them on display. Have quilters (your prospective teachers for the program) on hand to describe the quilts and answer questions. Have someone prepare a paper on the history of quilting, tell something of the way quilts are made, and give an insight into the romance of the names by which quilts are known. Books you may find in your library to help you with such a paper include: *Quilts, Their Story and How to Make Them* by Ruth E. Finley; *The Romance of the Patchwork Quilt in America* by Hall and Kretsinger; and *Quilting* by Ouida Pearse.

Perhaps your group is not sure it has the perseverance to complete a large quilt. Then you might start by making quilted pillow covers or crib quilts, directions for which may be obtained from the same firm. These are good sellers for your bazaar.

You may prefer to keep the activity purely social and educational, quilting tops pieced by your own members. Or, you may use it as a means of fund raising. If you offer your services publicly, to do quilting for outsiders, you will surely have more work than you can handle.

In its simplest terms quilting consists of stitching together the three layers that compose the quilt—the top, the interlining (preferably of smooth glazene cotton), and the back, usually of plain or colored gingham or muslin. Tiny running stitches are made with a short, sharp needle, generally with a glazed or waxed thread that will not fray. Fourteen stitches to the inch is about the maximum for the very finest work, and the nearer you come to that, the more professional your work will appear. This is more difficult when you realize that you cannot push the needle down and up in one stitch, but must draw it down through and then push up from beneath.

Good quilting can be done only with a regular quilting frame or with a quilting hoop, for sale in most department stores. To prepare the quilt for the quilting, first lay some clean paper on the floor, then lay the back on smoothly; then spread on the fill-

ing and finally the quilt top. Baste the three layers together to avoid any shifting or slipping. The back and the filling should protrude beyond the edges of the top on all sides and not be trimmed until the quilting is completed.

Choosing the quilting design is the next step. The Buffalo ladies get their ideas from the quilt itself, choosing a pattern that will best set off the design of the quilt top. They usually sew around the seams of the pieced blocks, showing off elaborate stitches in the borders and open places. If your pieced blocks are alternated with plain ones, you have a wonderful field for an appropriate and more intricate design. For best wear you should not leave any spaces unquilted that are more than two inches square. The more quilting you can stitch into your quilt the handsomer the finished work will be.

Long experience has made it possible for the members of the Buffalo Ladies' Aid to work out original quilting patterns, and those they use are their own. Their box of designs has accumulated countless flowers, crescents, circles, diamonds, birds, geometric figures, chains, zig-zags and scrolls—all cut from heavy cardboard so that they will be easy to trace around. Designs are penciled on the quilt after top, filling and back have been basted together and quilt has been stretched on quilting frame.

Says Marie D. Webster in *Quilts, Their Story and How to Make Them*:

The sociable, gossipy "quilting bee," where the quilt is put together and quilted, has planted in every community in which it is an institution the seeds of numberless lifelong friendships. These friendships are being made over the quilting frames today just as they were in the pioneer times when a "quilting" was almost the only social diversion. Content with life, fixity of purpose, development of individuality, all are brought forth in every woman who plans and pieces a quilt. The reward of her work lies not only in the pleasure of doing, but also in the joy of possession—which can be passed on even to future generations, for a well-made quilt is a lasting treasure.

## QUILT SYMBOLISM

Symbolism in quilts sets them apart as more than just beautiful pieces of handiwork. In early days the making of quilts was often a woman's only means of expression. Today this is not so common. But occasionally a woman finds a quilt the best way of saying what she wants to say—and a new design is born.

So it was with the "Enlightenment to the World" quilt, an original design by a churchwoman who felt impelled to impart a message in the language of quilting. Quite unexpectedly, this quilt also developed into a fund-raising project for the Women's Society of Christian Service of her Methodist Church in Kosse, Texas.

The quilt has for its center motif the Advance emblem of the W.S.C.S. of the Methodist Church. The quilt is worked out in yellow and black fabric, representing light and darkness. Around the central symbol are arranged small emblems of the Statue of Liberty, with the name of an individual embroidered on the base of each.

These figures the designer visualized as representative of Christians in a unified harmonious design, each doing what he or she can in sharing the "light of the world."

"These individuals are like spokes of light in the great wheel of life," she explains. "The light shines out, forming diamonds in the paths of service" (represented by diamond quilting between the figures). "The gospel of peace goes into the uttermost parts of the earth, forming circles of light around the globe" (indicated by the five large circles). Star shapes are quilted into the corners of the quilt, as well as in the space above the last circle and represent the "perpetuity of the Eternal."

Into her quilt this church woman poured all the significance of the parable of the virgins lighting the pathway for the bridegroom through a darkened world, Jesus' commission to "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations," as well as the inscription on the Statue of Liberty.

She got nine women from her W.S.C.S. group to take pieces and solicit names of men, women or children to be embroidered on the base of the Statue of Liberty figures. It was understood that those who subscribed to this project also subscribed to the importance of each individual's contributing something toward world enlightenment. Amounts ranging from 50c to \$1 were given for each name subscribed, and total contributions reached \$100. With the addition of a small amount from their treasury the ladies bought a communion table for their little church. Names of 123 persons are immortalized on the quilt.

When all the pieces were embroidered, the designer sewed them together. The local women agreed upon the advisability of hiring an expert to do the quilting, since the yellow thread stitched on black would demand a flawless appearance.

The quilt was exhibited first in their own church, then for a zone meeting in Bremond, Texas, later at Bryan, Texas, and at the meeting of the Methodist Board of Missions, Buck Hill Falls, Pennsylvania. Someone is usually designated to interpret the symbolism of the design.

## C H A P T E R 2 0



### *Let's Have a Quilt Show*

What's the difference between a tied quilt and an appliquéd one? A pieced quilt and a patched one? Even the men will know after you've held a Quilt Show.

For a "different" sort of good time what could be more colorful and fun than a Quilt Show combined with a box supper? Interest in quilting is reviving by leaps and bounds.

Your show may aim at exhibiting some of the beautiful work done by members of your own church. Or it may be held to stimulate new interest in a typically American folk art throughout the community. When it is over, some of your members will probably want to organize a quilting group, if there is not one already.

Choose a date for your show that will conflict as little as possible with other church or community affairs, and make your plans well ahead. It is a good idea to continue the show for more than one afternoon and evening, because many will come after hearing the report of those attending the first sessions. Plan to open your show on a specific afternoon with a formal viewing. At this time prizes should be awarded by the judges, and appropriate speeches made. You might follow this with a box supper. Quilts may be kept on exhibit after this special opening.

For a show of approximately three hundred quilts you will need a general chairman assisted by a collection committee, display, publicity and refreshment committees. If your show is smaller, committees may be combined.

Seeking out owners of quilts will be the challenge of the collection committee. If this group has a newspaperman's "nose for news," they will not be content with making a general appeal for quilts through your church bulletin or local newspaper. They will get on the telephone and track down every lead they can ferret out. This type of collection committee will pull in some rare finds that will make your Quilt Show memorable.

Whether the owners bring in the quilts or the committee arranges to call for them, it is most important that all quilts be at the show by noon of the day before the event. If the quilts are picked up at the owners' homes, all necessary data (owner's name, name of design, name of maker and date made) must be obtained, noted on a numbered card or tag securely basted to the quilt. It is a good idea to have a duplicate, which is retained for identification by the owner.

You can get attractive quilt exhibit markers with spaces for all this information, plus a duplicate receipt tag, from the Stearns & Foster Co., Lockland, Cincinnati, Ohio. These are ten cents per hundred.

If the show is to be merely an exhibition of quilts with no awarding of ribbons or prizes, the quilts are immediately placed in the hands of the display committee. If there is to be a contest, they are turned over to the classification committee. In a blank book this committee should set down the owner's name and address opposite his number, at the same time deciding into which class the quilt falls. This class number should also be recorded. Attach to the quilt a small card or piece of muslin, showing plainly the entry number and classification number. Fix this on securely by basting in place and remove or obscure any other identification marks.

The display committee is responsible for hanging, draping and arranging the quilts. If the quilts are not in competition, this committee should place a neat card on each, indicating any interesting information about the piece. If there is a contest, these cards should not be shown on the quilts until after the awards have been made. For best display effect, separate new quilts

from the old; the bright colors in new ones would otherwise show older quilts to disadvantage. Floodlights or spotlights borrowed from a store would play up the beauty of some prize specimens.

For added interest, set up a quilting frame with a partially finished quilt in it. Several quilters at work would be even more effective. To create an appealing atmosphere have your committee dressed in white wigs or bonnets and old-fashioned costumes. Appropriate properties for the room are antique chairs and perhaps a spinning wheel. If the room affords a stage, you might decorate it as an old-fashioned bedroom, complete with four-poster bed and one of the loveliest quilts.

The display committee must see to the safety of the quilts and prevent any soiling, damage or risk of fire. A watchman overnight is advisable. Insurance against fire loss or theft is not costly for the short time required. Serving refreshments in the room with the quilts is risky.

Quilts show to best advantage when hung full length from wires stretched along the walls or, if possible, run across the room about twelve feet apart. Better still, if the room is large, stretch wires both lengthwise and crosswise. The last method will give you a network of twelve-foot squares, permitting a variety of display possibilities—twelve-foot alcoves along the walls, solid quadrangles of quilts in the center of the room or a perfect maze of quilts.

No. 12 galvanized wire is best, stretched as tightly as possible. If wiring is impractical, quilts can be hung along the walls. Never tack through the quilts.

Quilts should be securely fastened; the best device is one with a clip on one end to grip the quilt and a hook on the other end to go over the wire. Stout safety pins may also be used. Count on five for each quilt to be hung. In the center of the room quilts may be draped over hatracks, card tables, or other furniture, but be sure to keep them from touching the floor.

Intriguing advertising and news features to work up the public's interest in the Quilt Show constitute the job of the publicity committee. Play up any unusual facts about any of the quilts to

be shown—the quilt of ten thousand pieces, the quilt copied from the one given the President, the one in which the family silver was buried, the one made by Mrs. Brown's grandfather. Such facts may be worked into good news items which your newspaper will surely print, and you may even get notice over your broadcasting station. Hand-lettered cards decorated with quilt designs make effective advance posters. Colorful quilt designs clipped right off your quilt filling wrappers are excellent for this purpose.

The refreshment committee will see to preparing an attractive tea and serving the guests. If you prefer to have a box supper, this committee may specify certain requirements for boxes. The refreshment committee will also have charge of admissions, if there are to be any. The usual charge is fifty cents, including refreshments, but this would be higher for a box supper. Or, your admissions may be by voluntary contribution.

An awards committee, if necessary, should consist of three or more members, of whom an odd number act as judges. The judges should review the classification schedule and the scoring table (see charts given at the end of this chapter) and decide on their method of procedure.

The judge makes a memorandum of each quilt's entry and classification number, and the total number of points, according to the scoring table, to which he considers the quilt entitled. After thus scoring all the competing quilts, judges compare their individual scores and strike an average of their scores for each quilt. The highest scoring quilt of each classification is declared the winner. In case of tie scores in any one class, the majority vote of all of the judges shall decide. Let the judges also choose a "Show Champion" quilt from the winners of all classes, according to the highest score or by majority vote.

Trophies, usually ribbons, are provided by the awards committee—blue for first prize, red for second, and white for third. On the ribbons should be printed in gold (almost any printer can do this) "First Prize," "Second Prize" or "Third Prize" and also the name of the Quilt Show and the date. Have a set of

ribbons for each class and one large blue ribbon for the Show Champion.

So tie on your sunbonnet—and let's go!

## CLASSIFICATIONS

Here is a guide for listing your quilts in categories. If yours is a small show, it may be better not to distinguish between old and modern quilts and instead have one class only, with five subclasses as shown under Class "A."

### CLASS "A"—OLD QUILTS (*over fifty years old*)

CLASS A-1 Old pieced quilts which are quilted

CLASS A-2 Old patchwork (appliquéd) quilts which are quilted

CLASS A-3 Old combination quilts which are quilted (see note)

CLASS A-4 Old tied quilts—pieced or patched or embroidered, being tied or knotted instead of quilted

CLASS A-5 Old embroidered quilts which are quilted (see notes below)

### CLASS "B"—MODERN QUILTS (*less than fifty years old*)

CLASS B-1 Pieced quilts which are quilted

CLASS B-2 Patchwork (appliquéd) quilts which are quilted

CLASS B-3 Combination quilts which are quilted

CLASS B-4 Tied quilts—pieced or patched or embroidered, being tied or knotted instead of quilted

CLASS B-5 Embroidered quilts which are quilted

### CLASS "C"—Quilts of any kind made by a living person when over seventy-five years of age

### CLASS "D"—Quilts of any kind made by a living person when not over twelve years of age

#### NOTES ON CLASSIFICATION

*Combination quilts* are those which are not solely pieced, patched or embroidered, but a combination of these kinds of work. If an insufficient number of these are entered, disregard

the classification and place the quilts in either the pieced class and patched class, or the embroidered class.

*Embroidered quilts* are those in which the main figures are stitched in embroidery work. If an insufficient number of these are entered, disregard this classification. If the embroidered quilt is tied instead of quilted, it belongs in the tied class.

*Antique quilts.* If the exhibition is held in a locality rich in antique quilts (at least one hundred years old), we suggest an antique class be provided. The number of antiques available will determine whether subclasses (as under Class "A") should be considered.

*Unfinished quilts.* Quilts to be eligible for entry must be fully completed. Quilt blocks which have been merely set together to form a quilt should be disqualified.

SCORING TABLE  
(*for judging quilts*)

Beauty of design of the top.....	15 pts.
Color scheme of the top (adaptation of colors to design) ..	10 pts.
Workmanship on the entire quilt (exclusive of quilting) ..	25 pts.
Beauty of quilting design ..	20 pts.
Workmanship of quilting.....	30 pts.

## C H A P T E R 21



### *New Life for the Sewing Committee*

Your sewing committee will be just what you make it—a friendly, happy group coming for the love of working together, or the faithful few who doggedly stand by against all odds.

Sewing for those in need has long been one of the greatest services church women can render to the local or world community. There is a spiritual lift to be gained from being as personal as possible in your giving—to experience the satisfaction of producing attractive little garments and knowing exactly who is going to wear them. But why do so few women avail themselves of this opportunity to serve?

The sewing committee of the Reformed Church, Bronxville, New York, found the answer. Step into their room any Sewing Preparation day throughout the year, hear the pleasant buzz of conversation mingled with the hum of six sewing machines and the power cutter, see the little circles of women, heads bent over their work, and you too will have the answer. They are working *together*. It is the togetherness that counts.

When a new church woman took over as sewing chairman, she began asking friends why they didn't come to the sewing-committee meetings. One answer was typical of others: "I went one time, was stuck at the same job the whole day, and never got to speak to a single soul."

She realized that women who have time to devote to sewing are usually those with few family demands who are looking for some sort of companionship outside their homes. Spending a

day in solitary sewing doesn't offer a very inviting prospect, and unless they feel the pull of duty, they will find excuses to stay away.

In two years the sewing committee of the Reformed Church increased from ten regular workers to an average of twenty-five to thirty, and the chairman set this down to better opportunities for friendliness. She made an effort to put people to work in groups, to draw up a chair beside someone who hadn't started talking with others, to introduce new arrivals to this individual, and to get conversation going. She saw to it that no one was left alone long at a sewing machine. One or two other ladies would usually draw up chairs alongside and do handwork. Two ladies work together at the cutting table and two work at a table laying out the proper findings for various garments.

The chairman always asked her workers what they would like to do best, rather than risk putting someone at a task which she particularly disliked. And she overcame boredom by varying the work during the day.

It had been customary for the group to bring their own lunches and munch more or less privately on their own sandwiches. This chairman experimented with all sitting down to lunch together, and found it created much greater friendliness. All the ladies enjoyed the pause for food and brief devotionals and went back to work refreshed. So it became the custom for each one to take her turn preparing lunch in the church kitchen for the whole group—something very simple, such as soup or a salad. Lunch costs each lady twenty-five cents. Expenses for food supplies come to approximately five dollars, and anything left over can be spent for sewing needs.

Now let's take a peep into the storeroom of the sewing committee where are neatly shelved patterns, findings, materials, as well as the finished products. Open this cupboard and you will find row upon row of gay, colorful girls' dresses. Open that and you find darling suits for little boys, shirts for bigger ones. In the next you find the dearest of baby clothes. In still another pretty, durable pajamas and underthings.

The impressive list of work turned out annually by this group—3,270 surgical dressings and 1,282 garments—is evidence that it pays to encourage friendliness and good fellowship in the sewing committee. The sewing chairman has even had to seek new fields in order to find work for all the willing hands to do.

One of their layettes consists of two nightgowns, kimonos, sacques, bibs, blankets and pairs of booties; six diapers and six safety pins, a slip, a dress and a cap. In one year garments made by the group included the following: *Layettes*: 47 dresses, 47 slips, 98 nightgowns, 98 kimonos, 98 sacques, 102 bibs, 30 pairs booties, 99 blankets, 36 bonnets, 14 rompers, and 294 diapers. *General sewing*: 46 girls' dresses, 46 slips, 12 sunsuits, 26 pajamas, 91 pair panties, 22 boys' shirts, 22 boys' pants, and 28 pair white socks.

Naturally, all this sewing is not done by twenty-five or thirty women. The work of the sewing committee on Sewing Preparation day is to prepare handwork to be done by the entire women's society, consisting of two hundred members, during their all-day meeting once a month. The sewing committee handles all cutting, gets all the machine stitching done, hems turned up and basted, ribbon ties cut and pinned in place. Diapers may be hemmed by hand or on the machine. Surgical dressings are made only during the all-day meetings. The work is carried on all through the year, except for July and August, and sewing is taken outdoors when weather permits. Only a few women want handwork to take home; the rest is done at meetings.

The women's society allows five hundred dollars per year for sewing materials. With this the sewing chairman buys large bolts of material at wholesale prices, as well as supplies such as laces, edgings, thimbles, tape measures, rickrack, ribbon, buttons, tape, elastic, bias tape, pencils, scissors and rulers.

When you ask people what they'd like to do, instead of assigning tasks, you can generally get the woman who is expert at the sewing machine to do your stitching while a specialist in feather-stitching will be finishing layette pieces. This Reformed Church group has one woman who is expert at making buttonholes on

the machine, and she takes care of that entire activity. Any special work is handled by one or two regular workers, who know exactly how to do it. For cutting, the ladies use heavy patterns made of brown wrapping paper stiff enough to lie flat. They can place up to eight layers of cutting flannel on their cutting board at once, mark around the pattern with a heavy pencil, and then, as one lady follows the outline with a power cutter, another attends her, holding up the wire to keep it from disarranging pattern and material. Instructions as to how to assemble the garment are penciled right on the patterns used.

Little scraps of outing flannel left over are made into booties and bibs. Scraps from dresses and suits may be turned into rompers and sunsuits. Whatever is too small for these purposes is given to the Red Cross for stuffing toy animals. There is no waste.

Perhaps the methods of this group will give your group fresh inspiration. Has your interest in sewing slackened because there seemed to be little need in your community for this type of contribution? Contact your denominational board, and they can give you plenty of worth-while causes which will welcome all the sewing you can do and more. Be sure that you keep in touch with your local family service society, hospitals and public nursing services, and you will get calls from them occasionally for needed garments.

A fashion show or display of the garments you make for these worthy causes might stimulate interest for more workers. Have some of the little tots from your Sunday school model different articles of apparel so that everyone can see how attractive are the things you make in your group. Maybe there is a baby or two who can model the layette articles. A display of your work—possibly just prior to making a shipment—would also be effective in illustrating graphically what has been accomplished and giving an indication of how much more might be done with additional workers.

Let's do something about pepping up our church's sewing activities.

## MAKE YOUR OWN CHOIR ROBES

To buy choir robes would have meant an expensive burden to the little Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith of Burr Oak, Indiana. Yet they wanted their church to be representative in every way, so the thrifty and industrious women undertook to make their own robes.

The pastor's wife, who is also organist, secured a choir robe pattern, and the group set to work. They selected a black Fruit of the Loom fabric, which the choir director purchased from his local department store. Material for the white collars was donated by a woman who had a piece of suitable fabric on hand. With two sets of detachable white collars, the robes can be kept looking spic and span. The average cost of the thirteen robes came to \$2.35 each. Thread and snaps were extra.

All robes were long—eight inches from the floor. With the exception of the organist's robe, all sleeves were made longer than the pattern allowed, measuring so that they would reach to the middle thumb joint. Neck gathers were adjusted and sewed to a straight strip of black material two inches wide, or one-half inch wide when finished. For the men's robes, necklines were adjusted so that they allow the points of their white shirt collars to show. Black bow ties complete their attire.

For economy in use of material two women worked together to do all the cutting. Paper patterns were drafted for each of three sizes. A robe was cut and made in each size, so that they could determine the most suitable size for each member, at the same time noting adjustments for hem and sleeve length.

Choir members who could sew made their own garments. One good seamstress, not a choir member, volunteered her services for those who could not sew. Another, who could not assemble her garment, helped by doing the handwork for several others.

"Thus the same spirit of friendly co-operation attended this

project that has been with all others attempted by this church," wrote the pastor's wife. "We were all much pleased with the robes. Though simple in detail, they give a neat and dignified appearance to our choir."

You can do the same using a smock pattern available in any pattern department.

### EMBROIDER A NEW ALTAR CLOTH

Does your church need a new altar cloth or communion table linens? Here's inspiration for some of you ladies who are handy with a needle. A lovely new wheat motif has been developed and brought out in an embroidery pattern suitable for altar cloths, chalice veils, pulpit antependiums and lectern hangings. The pattern also includes instructions for using the design for tablecloths and napkins for home use.

In making an altar cloth, a simple way to determine how much fabric you need is to drape a sheet over the altar, then pencil or pin lines where cloth is to be hemmed. Allow a  $\frac{5}{8}$ " hem, measure the sheet after penciling or pinning, and you have the proper quantity of cloth. Because different altars are different sizes, it is better to determine exactly how much fabric you will need before purchasing it.

The pattern includes transfer designs for embroidering  $4\frac{1}{4}$  yards of wheat banding  $4\frac{1}{2}$ " wide; eight single wheat sprays  $3"$  x  $4\frac{1}{4}"$ ; four pairs of double wheat sprays  $4\frac{1}{4}"$  x  $4\frac{3}{4}"$ ; one "IHS" which measures  $4"$  x  $6\frac{3}{4}"$ ; one smaller "IHS" measuring  $2"$  x  $2\frac{3}{8}"$ ; two styles of crosses in three sizes. Four crosses of each size ( $1\frac{1}{2}"$ ,  $2\frac{1}{4}"$ , and  $3"$ ) are included.

A leaflet illustrating an embroidered tablecloth and giving complete instructions for embroidering and designing altar cloths using the wheat, crosses, and "IHS" symbols is included in each pattern. There are also instructions for using sewing-machine embroidery as well as hand embroidery. The transfer embroidery designs included in the pattern are to be stamped on the

fabric with a heated iron. Order at your McCall's Pattern counter or prepaid from the McCall Corp., Dayton 1, Ohio. Price is 45c.

## SEWING LESSONS

Teaching little girls to sew is a rewarding community service your group can give if they are handy with the needle, and equipped with patience. So many women do not sew themselves these days, and consequently someone who will teach their daughters is usually welcomed. Girls from six upward are ready for beginning steps—and even boys may want to learn enough sewing to mend a pocket lining or replace a button.

Ten pupils are as many as you will want to include in one class. If you have more would-be students, divide them into classes according to age or ability. Take advantage of the summer vacation to get your classes under way. Hold classes in the morning, if possible, when everyone is fresher. Offer a series of ten lessons, and by giving two or three a week, you can complete the course by the time school opens. After that you might start a new Saturday morning series. Have pupils sign up for the entire course, tuition payable in advance.

Seat them around a big table on the porch or a shaded part of the yard, if at all possible. Remember that summer means out-of-doors to children, and cooping them up indoors on a beautiful day is the surest way to make them hate sewing.

Make an outline of the points to be covered in each of your ten beginning lessons. It will probably be better to spend a minimum of time, say ten minutes, explaining the work for the day, showing some examples of finished work, so the children can visualize what they are striving for, and then spend the rest of the time letting them learn by doing.

Forcing them to make row upon row of practice stitching may turn out good seamstresses, but it will not give them the enthusiasm for sewing they will find in creating garments for their dolls. Some excellent new patterns for doll clothes are available. These

are prepared so simply that children can pin and cut them out as well as sew them.

Ask each little girl to bring with her to the first class the doll for which she wants to sew, and a box containing her own scissors, needles, pins, thread and thimble. Keep the sewing boxes on a shelf in your sewing room, with the work of each child in her own box.

Invite the little girls to bring scrap fabrics from home. Some may want to make doll dresses to match their own. This will help in providing the needed supplies. You yourself may have a collection of scrap fabrics which have been awaiting such an opportunity as this. Or you may need to purchase some materials.

Most important of all is to make this a happy adventure for little girls into an exciting new field of expression.

## C H A P T E R   2 2



### *Home Talent Show*

A wholesome outlet for creative energies is performing for an audience. Your abilities may never command the acclaim of crowds, but when you've mastered a difficult (for you) feat, it's good to air your prowess before friends. Children can gain poise through appearing publicly. So why not give an amateur show?

Family Week, preceding Mother's Day, is just the time for it. Or, if you'd rather use the idea as a fund-raising affair, such an event could be put on almost any time of year. Let this show be principally the children's time to shine, with adults joining in when there's a skit or group idea that could feature a family unit.

At the Green St. Baptist Church, Melrose, Massachusetts, an annual Home Talent Night is one of the church highlights each year. A member writes: "This highly popular program consists of many beginning piano pupils' first solos, readings, poems, duets, trios, instrumental music of all kinds. There is no idea of 'showing off' the children. These are our church family folks helping their church."

An event of this kind makes for a sense of teamwork, with everyone sharing his special talents for the pleasure of others and the benefit of the church. Too, the approval of one's friends and neighbors spurs one on to bigger achievements.!

Preparations for such an evening couldn't be easier. At the most, one rehearsal with full cast is required. And think of the family fun of rehearsing at home at your own convenience, and

of working out your own costuming, unlimited by what others are wearing!

First step, naturally, is lining up your talent. A notice in your church bulletin asking all who wish to take part to report what they can do to the talent committee, will give you a start. But you will have to search out talent, too. If your committee knows of individuals who have not volunteered, call them by telephone and urge them to offer their abilities for the church. Some folks just have to be coaxed! ✓

As your program begins to develop, aim for as much variety as possible. Suggest ideas to persons who want to take part but can't think of something to do. In one church where home talent shows are given every year one family enacted the Christmas worship service that they observe in their own home. Dramatic skits require the most preparation, but will furnish the greatest interest.

It is always delightful to watch little ones perform, even if it is only reciting a nursery rhyme. But a long series of nursery rhymes would pall on any audience, and it isn't fair to the later performers to have audience interest dulled before they appear. You might publish or post on a church bulletin board a list of ideas to inspire more variety and to encourage some who think there isn't anything they can do. Children of one family could work out together a trained animal act, with two or three children acting as trained seals, bears, or dogs, or riding prancing hobby horses made from broomsticks; others could form a rhythm band playing homemade instruments, or a tumbling or balancing act.

For boys who scorn music and get tongue-twisted in recitals, you might suggest doing a few magic tricks, rope twirling, whistling, signal-flag waving, an exhibition of drawing (set up a small blackboard), Indian club or dumbbell exercises, or dart throwing (set target at back of stage). Girls might like to do a roller-skating routine, jump rope or do an exercise with hoops. What fun if someone had a trained parakeet or dog they could bring to perform!

\*The home talent show gives many children studying musical

instruments a valuable opportunity to play for an audience. Be sure to check titles of music to be played to avoid unfortunate duplication or comparison. It would be especially interesting if members of the same family who play different instruments should work out a duet or trio. If your performance is to take place on Family Night, emphasize the family element as much as possible.

If your program is in danger of becoming too long, some of the performers may group to combine their talents, even if they do not belong to the same family. One child could play the piano as accompaniment to another swinging Indian clubs or jumping rope. Several youngsters might work out a recitation to do in unison, or break it up and let each child take a different part of the recitation. Even voices not trained to sing harmony will have fun as a quartet singing a simple round, such as "Row, row, row your boat."

When your program is lined up, you can decide whether or not you need a dress rehearsal of the entire show. If it is to be given for a paying audience, you undoubtedly should take this precaution to time it, and, if necessary, pad it out or cut it down. If it is simply for your church family group, adjustments and allowances can be made as the evening progresses—and nobody will be upset over it.

Now, what style will you choose for presenting your show? Instead of a formal announcement that "Susie Smith will play a piano solo," guaranteed to put the shakes into the most courageous, why not borrow the spirit of the television amateur hours? Create an informal atmosphere that will relax tense amateurs and help them give their best performances instead of making mistakes through nervousness.

Seat your master of ceremonies at a small table at one side of the stage. Before him he should have the program and some suggestions for subjects of conversation with each of the performers. Have youngsters enter from the opposite side of the stage from where he sits. There should be a mistress of ceremonies who will be in charge of marshaling each act into place

as its turn comes. She should lead the ones ready to perform from the stage entrance across the entire stage to the master of ceremonies. Getting out onto the stage is often the hardest part for amateurs, and to get the feeling of the whole stage under them while they still have the moral support of an adult, should overcome much stage fright. If children are very small, or quite shy, the mistress of ceremonies may even take them by the hand to give them confidence. She should introduce each youngster to the master of ceremonies, announcing his name clearly, and then return to the stage entrance to make sure the next act is ready.

The master of ceremonies should chat pleasantly with the child on stage for a moment, asking questions to draw him out, such as, "How old are you? What grade are you in school? Do you like school? Where did you get the pretty costume you are wearing? How long have you taken lessons in the instrument you are going to play?" and finally, "What are you going to do?" This leads the individual into announcing his own part in the program, makes some interesting by-play, and gets him accustomed to the stage and audience before he goes into his act.

The mistress of ceremonies should remain standing at the stage entrance, throughout the act, keeping the next performer just offstage. As the youngster finishes and walks toward her to leave the stage, she might hand him a lollipop or candy bar from a beribboned basket she is carrying, causing him to pause long enough to receive his applause, and reminding him, if necessary, to take a little bow. Then she lets him go out, and leads in the next performer. The mistress of ceremonies should be gaily dressed for the occasion in something colorful and fluffy, rather than in a dark dress and hat. Unless there is need to close the curtains for elaborate scenery or properties, it would be better not to use stage curtains during this show at all.

The Home Talent Night at Melrose, Massachusetts, originated fifteen years ago with a small group of Junior High young people who rounded up the talent, planned, decorated, and put on with it a baked bean supper. They had the help of several mothers.

This annual feature grew so overwhelmingly that the young adult fellowship had to take over the supper completely, charging a nominal sum for a splendid turkey banquet. Whole families made reservations and packed the church social hall the night of the big event.

This Massachusetts Home Talent Night finally outgrew the church accommodations, and made sponsoring the supper very nearly impossible for any group to manage. As a result, this year they called it a "mid-winter picnic" and asked each family to bring its own Saturday night supper in baskets or boxes complete with dishes and silverware. No dishes were washed at the church, and no charge was made for the evening, but there were still plenty of decorations and plenty of home talent. The idea of a picnic, which appeals to children at any time of year, seemed especially exciting in mid-winter.

"This makes an ideal way to get all ages together in the church family," says one church member. "We always like to have it a supper gathering, for small children have so few opportunities to come to church suppers." Program and all is over by 8:30 p. m. at the latest, so it is not too much even for tiny tots.

You, too, can make amateur fun and frolics an attractive feature for your church.

## C H A P T E R 2 3



### *Charades—for Old-fashioned Fun*

Back in the 1870's, charades were as popular as quiz programs are today. These were not the diluted version of charades we play at present-day parties, under the title of "The Game" or something similar. These were real dramatic sketches with spoken lines, performed on a curtained stage, often with elaborate costumes and scenery. Then, as now, the object was to guess the words being enacted.

This form of charades was a favorite for fund-raising purposes as well as for entertainment. If the Ladies' Aid wanted to hold a benefit to support its missionary work abroad, it might present a program of charades for which tickets were sold, as the Peterkins did when they wanted to make a donation for the purchase of the village water trough in that well-loved book of the 1880's, *Peterkin Papers*, by Lucretia P. Hale.

Why not revive this idea from the past for an unusual note in your program plans? Nothing is more effective than audience participation in a performance, and everybody likes to solve mysteries. Add to this a colorful dramatic presentation, plus a speck of humor for seasoning and you have a recipe for a successful evening.

You will need a cast of six or more actors and a pianist who will play suitable accompaniment throughout the evening. You should have an announcer who will not appear in costume, but will make necessary explanations and assist by holding up cards on which are printed single letters which cannot be acted out

but are essential to deciphering the mystery word. Provide your audience with pencils and paper as they enter the auditorium, so they can jot down notes to help in decoding the charades as they are enacted.

The announcer might begin: "Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to an evening of old-fashioned charades. The words we have chosen to act out tonight are all names of famous persons [or Bible characters, or whatever you select]. Before the action begins, I will announce how many syllables each word has and how many scenes we will use to depict it. First we will act out each syllable, then the whole word. When there is an extra letter that doesn't fit into a scene, I will hold it up on a card—so!" (She illustrates.)

"You have been provided with pencil and paper for your convenience. Please don't spoil the fun for your neighbors by guessing out loud. When I give the signal at the end of the action, you will have an opportunity to shout out the word we have enacted.

"Now we are ready for the first word. This is the name of a famous person. It has four syllables and will be acted in three scenes."

The curtain opens showing an oculist giving a young woman an eye test. The patient reads an oculist's card of letters, first with one eye and then with the other. The oculist says, "You have very good eyes." The curtain falls, and the audience should be jotting down the word *eyes*.

The announcer now steps out and holds up the letter "N" clearly written on a large card, and the audience jots down N. The next scene shows two Indians in blankets and bright feather headdresses. They enter from either side of the stage and as they meet in the center, they raise their right hands in typical Indian greeting and grunt "How!" The audience writes down *how* as the curtains close.

The last scene is a schoolroom. One child at the back of the stage is writing sums on a blackboard: "two plus two equals five; four plus four equals seven," and similar incorrect solutions. A

boy sits behind a girl at two desks in the center of the stage. The boy is tying the girl's braids to the back of her seat. The teacher, facing them, says, "Mary Jones, will you recite the poem?"

Mary starts to rise, is pulled back into her seat by the braids and cries, "Ouch!"

"Jim Smith, I shall have to punish you!" cries the teacher.

"Please don't punish him, teacher," says Mary. "He didn't mean to." Jim unties braids.

"To err is human; to forgive divine," sighs the teacher, as the curtain falls. The correct word is *err*.

"Now for the whole," says the announcer, coming out from the curtains. She points to the pianist, who has been playing incidental music throughout the scenes. The spotlights now focus on the pianist as she breaks into the first bars of "Hail to the Chief!"

"What is the word, audience?" asks the announcer. And the audience should with one accord shout, "*Eisenhower!*"

"Right!" says the announcer. "First syllable, *eyes*, second, *N*, third, *how*, and fourth, *err*."

This gives you an idea of how exciting, colorful and entertaining charades may be when used this way. You may work up any number of words you feel can be used in the length of your evening. If admission is charged, time your scenes so that you know accurately the length of the program.

Choice of words is highly important in charades. Those used must lend themselves to a good division of syllables, which can be acted out in an interesting manner. Here are some suggestions:

*Columbus*: Co, Lum ('n Abner), bus; or: column, bus. *Longfellow*: long, fell, owe or oh. *Napoleon*: nap, oleo, n. *Robinson Crusoe*: robin, son, crew, sew.

Perhaps you will want an evening of "Biblical Pairs." For instance: *Adam 'n Eve*: a, dam, n, eve or eave. *Cain 'n Abel*: cane, n, a, bell. *Isaac 'n Jacob*: I, sack, n, jay, cob. Or, *Jacob 'n Esau*: jay, cob, n, he, saw. *Noah 'n Ark*: know, ah, n, arc. *Moses 'n Aaron*: Moe, sis, n, a, run, or: m, oasis, n, air, run. *Mark 'n Luke*: on the mark, not very warm.

Or try states: *Arkansas*: Ark, can, saw. *Iowa*: I, owe, weigh. *Pennsylvania*: pen, windowsill, weathervane, ia. *Delaware*: Della, wear. *Utah*: you, tau. *Oregon*: oar or ore, e, gone. *Mississippi*: miss, i, sip, i. For other words choose those of several syllables, like: *decorate*: deck, oar, ate; or deck, owe, rate; *antedate*: aunty date; *gangster*: gang, stir; *caricature*: carry, cat, your; *Antarctic*: aunt, arc, tick; *microscope*: my, crow, scope; *pilgrimage*: pill, grim, age, etc.

Charades used for fund-raising purposes and produced for a paying audience must be well worked out, carefully costumed and timed, and specific lines must be learned. But they may also be an impromptu fun-raising program for any evening of your church calendar—family night, mother and daughter banquets, father and son banquets, young people's get-togethers, and couples' clubs. If charades are not planned in advance, a chest of costume materials—shawls, scarves, hats, boxes, umbrellas, canes, etc.—may be provided to help in acting out scenes.

A competitive angle might be worked out, too. Each of several Sunday-school classes might prepare and give its own charade for the benefit of the rest. At the end of the evening determine which charade was best by a group of judges or by audience vote. However used, authentic old-fashioned charades promise much fun for your church group activities.

## C H A P T E R 2 4



### *A Clean-up Party Does the Job!*

Susan Jones is making a good-natured face through the church window as she rubs vigorously on the brightening pane of glass. On the other side Bill Bridges rubs with equal ardor, crying, "I'll beat you yet, Susie!" At all the ground-level church windows teen-age girls are working on the inside, boys on the outside. In progress is one of the many events at the annual church clean-up party—the window-washing marathon, boys versus girls.

Does your village church each year need a thorough, inch by inch, all-over cleaning which you can little afford, and which is entirely too great a task to expect of your janitor? In scores of small churches scattered throughout the countryside, clean-up work is done by the busy minister and his family or perhaps by a part-time caretaker, or by a handicapped person who needs work. However loyal and worthy, these workers cannot give your church the good sound cleaning the house of God should have at regular intervals.

In the neighborly spirit of the old-time barn-raising parties and of modern projects where a whole community has turned out to help an injured war veteran, the families of your congregation could get together for a one-day church clean-up. It can be as much fun as a Sunday-school picnic if worked out in a similar manner.

Let each family bring its own lunch, and serve coffee and ice cream from the church kitchen, or have a committee prepare a full meal for the workers. Divide the chores into "events," fea-

turing different ages and groups who can reasonably do the work.

Event No. 1 will no doubt be the window-washing contest between teen-age boys and girls. Losers must give a party for the winners.

For event No. 2 divide the members into teams of five persons each. Some may be families, others assorted individuals. Each team should be assigned a certain task—one team to carefully wash and polish the pulpit and furniture; one to vacuum the carpets; several teams to wash and polish pews and chairs; another to wash and polish vases, baskets and containers for flowers, remembering to return them to the proper Sunday-school departments; another to clean the keys of organ and pianos with a damp cloth, dust and rearrange music shelves. If there are draperies to be cleaned and aired, a team should be assigned to this; Sunday-school classroom bookcases may be cleaned by another group. A trio of judges should be appointed to vote on the merits of the work and choose the winning team. Score so many points for thoroughness, attention to detail, tidiness of procedure, teamwork, and so on. Members of the winning team may each receive a free ticket to the next church supper. Avoid disputes over what work each team shall do by numbering each task. Put numbers on slips of paper and let each team draw.

Event No. 3 will be Scrubbing Detail. Mark off any big bare floors into large squares, assigning each square to an individual woman armed with her own pail and scrubbing equipment. Husbands and children may be on the sidelines to cheer on their favorites. At the starting signal the women begin scrubbing, and prizes are awarded to the two winners judged fastest and most thorough. A luscious homemade cake and a fragrant loaf of home-baked bread will do nicely as prizes.

When wax has been applied to the floor, the children may put on old socks and skate over the surface until they have it well polished. (You will probably want to finish off the job with a rented or borrowed waxing machine.)

Suppose you have a picket fence that needs painting. Event

No. 4 might be a contest among the men, supplied with their own paint brushes. Working in teams, two men, one on each side, could start painting at each end of the fence and work until they meet. The winners would be the pair who had covered the largest number of pickets, and might receive as prize a pair of hand-knit gloves or a hand-knit tie. Or, divide the church grounds into partitions for an over-all raking and seeding as in the scrubbing contest.

Even the shut-ins and the aged ought to have a little task brought to them so that they, too, may partake of the pleasure and feel part of the plan. They would enjoy taping and mending a worn Bible or hymnals.

Does your church need a complete painting? Your members may prefer to do themselves what they can't immediately pay someone else to do. Take a tip from St. John's Episcopal Church, Crestwood, New York, and organize your own paint crew.

Cars stopped and neighbors leaned from their windows to watch the unusual sight of from ten to twenty men on ladders all working on the church at once. Paint flowed while drop cloths protected shrubbery and men talked and joked good-naturedly as they plied their paint brushes. Beautiful spring weather contributed to the success of the project, and it was estimated that the project saved the church from six to seven hundred dollars.

Beforehand a general notice that the church was to be painted was read at vestry meetings and at regular Sunday services, and men were invited to bring their own paint brushes and help on the appointed Saturday. A professional decorator in the church membership provided ladders and bought paint at cost, and the men worked on two consecutive Saturdays. Approximately twenty men showed up each Saturday—some to work the full day, others to give as many hours as they were able. Three of the ladies of the church provided a hearty lunch at noon in the parish house. They made up quantities of man-size sandwiches, served a tossed salad, coffee cake, Danish pastries and lots of good hot coffee.

All the men had a grand time and, when it was finished, had

a greater sense of awareness of the church's belonging to them. More important than the fact that the work was accomplished so inexpensively was the wonderful spirit of fellowship.

Church cleaning can become a jolly time, and members will cherish even more fondly the church they have cared for with their own hands.

## C H A P T E R   2 5



### *Modernize That Kitchen!*

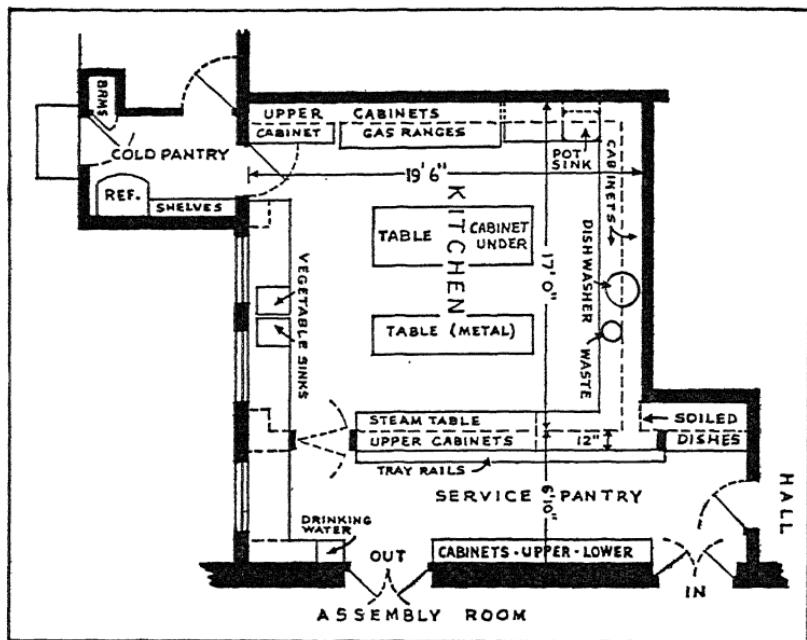
Perhaps you have recently put down a new carpet in your church. Or painted the exterior. Or added a new wing. Or installed automatic heating equipment. But have you done anything about the kitchen? Is it the same dingy-looking place it was ten or twenty years ago?

A sparkling new kitchen does something for the morale of the whole church. Good food is more likely to come out of a good kitchen, for pleasant surroundings inspire everyone's best efforts. If the kitchen is inefficiently arranged, unsanitary, stifling, dark—workers will be hard to get and meals will reflect a "hit-and-run" attitude. Every church member—server and served, man and woman—has a vested interest in this important workroom.

If you ask the ladies of Asbury Methodist Church, Crestwood, New York, what they like best about their bright new kitchen, they invariably sigh with satisfaction and point to their "service pantry." This is a wide (6'10") passage, separated by counters and steam table from, but still part of, the kitchen proper. Two swinging doors open into the dining room, allowing for one-way traffic—in one door and out the other. This pantry is lined with cabinets above and below the counter space, where are stored plates, cups, saucers, flat silverware, glasses, pitchers, everything needed for setting tables. Even a faucet for drawing drinking water is placed conveniently near the outgoing doorway, so that the dining-room committee never need go into the kitchen

itself. A soiled dish louver in the pantry, close to the door opening "in," allows dishes to be passed directly to persons in the kitchen in charge of garbage disposal and the dishwasher, without interfering with the activities of any other workers.

The service pantry also helps to keep kitchen noises out of the assembly-dining room, if work must go on during speeches or



Floor plan for completed kitchen of Asbury Methodist Church, Crestwood, N.Y. The emphasis is on plenty of room to move about. There's an added lift to work in a sparkling new kitchen.

meetings, for it puts extra space between the kitchen and the assembly room.

Architects considered three special features when planning this kitchen—(1) an arrangement for cafeteria service; (2) plenty of room to move about; (3) lots of storage space.

One architect had served in the old church kitchen himself and knew he would also be serving in the new one. Experience had shown him the special needs of the church. He knew that

in a church kitchen workers are inexperienced in preparing meals as a group, and get in one another's way or crowd each other. Sometimes even small children may be running about.

Storage space is something else best appreciated by those who have had to do without it. So he used every bit of available wall space for attractive white enameled steel cabinets, both above and below counter level, even over ranges and steam table. More storage space is provided under a stationary work surface in the middle of the kitchen. Care has been taken to place each item where it will save the most steps in food preparation.

When an addition for the Asbury Methodist Church had been proposed, it was decided to remodel the activities house at the same time, particularly to move the kitchen from the basement to the upstairs, adjoining the large assembly hall.

The very night after the kitchen was completed, it helped to pay for itself by serving a record crowd of seven hundred. Putting the kitchen to the test while the builders were still under contract enabled the group to correct two or three minor flaws immediately.

Restaurant-type ranges were considered a must at Asbury Church, and the ladies furnished their kitchen with two large ones that would be adequate for many years to come—one six-burner and one ten-burner model. Placed side by side, they give a total of sixteen burners and three large ovens. Next in importance were proper sinks, and the church bought gleaming stainless steel ones, pleasanter for the average housewife to use than galvanized steel, although the latter are satisfactory and much less expensive. There is a double sink for vegetable preparation and a single one near the stoves.

Work surfaces of a glazed composition material were the gift of a church member, and give a clean, homey look to the kitchen. A special movable copper-topped table is provided for setting very hot dishes. Church members particularly wanted a dishwasher, and so their one-hundred-gallon submerged hot water tank had to be enlarged. Funds were low, but they managed to find an inexpensive dishwasher that handles a single basket of dishes in

two minutes. Baskets slide into one side of the machine and out the other without being lifted. The machine has a hot-water booster, but extra hot water is still needed. Stainless steel work surfaces on either side of the dishwasher were important. A wall fan to draw out heat and kitchen odors was a final necessity.

If you have a reasonably convenient and workable kitchen, you might put the cart before the horse in doing your remodeling. Make a plan for purchasing time and work-saving equipment, and buy it as you can. Then, when you are ready to remodel, you will have your kitchen already outfitted.

### DISHWASHERS—PRO AND CON

The dishwashing problem is always before the kitchen committee. And when hired help is hard to find and dishes pile high, an automatic dishwashing machine seems like a utopian dream. However, it can be a reality—provided all the conditions are right for it. But before you put your hard-earned funds into such a machine, be sure it is the thing for your church.

A New York State extension specialist in institution management reports that in many rural churches where dishwashing machines have been installed, they have been left unused to rust and deteriorate for one reason or another. An enthusiastic salesman may sell you a dishwasher, failing to take into consideration that the water supply of your church is not sufficient for the large amount needed for this type of dishwashing. Or, you may not have a large enough hot-water tank to bring the temperature up to the 180 degrees F. required by the department of health. In some instances service repair men have been so far from the community that the church cannot afford to have the machine repaired when something goes wrong, and so it stands idle. In other cases machines have been ruined by the inexperienced persons who were allowed to operate them.

Vincent Methodist Church, Nutley, New Jersey, has a highly successful installation of a dishwashing machine. One group of church women sponsored a talent fund and, over a period of

two years, raised nearly the cost of the dishwasher, in addition to meeting the quota of money for the general budget. The money was then turned into the general treasury and the dishwasher was bought for cash. A committee was appointed to purchase it, and it was decided to patronize one of the local manufacturers. They selected an institution-size dishwasher of stainless steel, which will wash two thousand pieces an hour, and calculated to be the adequate size to do the job required in that particular church. The installation had to meet local plumbing codes and the whole dishwashing kitchen was remodeled at the same time.

The women were particularly in need of a dishwasher since they frequently serve dinners for two hundred, and the clean-up job is tremendous. Before installing the dishwasher they were often short of volunteer workers and hired help was almost impossible to secure. Even when help was available the women were dissatisfied with the low sanitary standards that bulk hand dishwashing afforded. They knew a dishwasher would speed up the job, cut down labor, and do more efficient and sanitary work.

"The dishwasher is now used for every luncheon and dinner we serve," says a church member. "Its efficiency depends largely on a good supply of very hot water. The water is used economically, and the dishwasher has a gas burner to help maintain the temperature. But even when the water is not quite 180 degrees F., the dishes are far cleaner than by hand washing. If the water is hot enough, there is no dish wiping. When we do use towels, though, they never get dirty. Dishes never get chipped in this machine and last much longer. Everyone likes it and the job it does."

### A FREEZER FOR YOUR CHURCH?

Due to the weather, attendance was so poor at one meeting of a parent-teacher group that not only were the refreshments not eaten—there were not enough individuals to buy up the remains to take home. In desperation a member packed them up and

dropped them into the school cafeteria freezer. Next meeting there was an unexpectedly large attendance. Just as the refreshment committee was getting panicky about the inadequate supply of refreshments, someone remembered the left-overs in the freezer. Together with what there was on hand, this gave them ample for the big crowd.

Many women are asking, "Would it be profitable to buy an electric freezer for our church kitchen?" Here are some of the possibilities. Judge for yourself:

You can ease any advance food preparation by use of a freezer. Food can be prepared at the workers' leisure and kept until time to serve. Workers will be rested from the advance preparation and fresh for the job of serving and later cleaning up.

Casserole dishes for luncheons or suppers can be frozen right in the casseroles, covered securely with aluminum foil. If casseroles have their own covers, seal them airtight with freezer tape. You can prepare ahead of time spaghetti sauce for a spaghetti supper, ready to be reheated in a hurry. Stuff turkeys as much as a week before roasting. Mold or press hamburgers into shape. Separate patties with wax paper, all ready to broil for a young people's get-together or church picnic.

Fancy sandwiches, cookies, cupcakes and small pastries for receptions and teas can be made when you have plenty of time. Defrost only as needed. Any you don't use will keep as fresh as when made. Pies, cakes, all sorts of desserts keep well for later use. There's no worry about ice cream melting before time to serve. Use as much as you need; the rest will keep indefinitely. The freezer also speeds up preparation of gelatine foods, frozen salads and sherbets.

No longer do you have to rely on human judgment as to how much food to provide for a crowd. Extra frozen vegetables can be kept on hand to fill out a church supper; extra frozen juices for punches and appetizers may be always available. Rolls left from one women's group luncheon can be saved and served at your next, even a month hence.

A freezer may suit your church's needs.

A mixer is a valuable work saver. Other things to consider are trays, pressure cookers, food choppers and vegetable slicers, sets of various size spoons and ladles, good sharp knives, cutting boards, scales for measuring, easily read large-quantity measuring equipment.

But however you start your own kitchen-rehabilitation project—whether from the floor up or the appliances down—the object, never forget, is to help you do a better job as a church. A clean modern kitchen plays its part in forging bonds of fellowship, not only among those who can settle back after a hearty, wholesome meal and listen to a speaker, but among those who are left with the dirty dishes.

## C H A P T E R 2 6



### *Planning a Dream Kitchen*

What is your dream of a kitchen for your church? Is it out of all reach, or would you be satisfied with a few simple changes that would make the work less exhausting? There are many questions to be considered in remodeling a church kitchen. We can present only a few here.

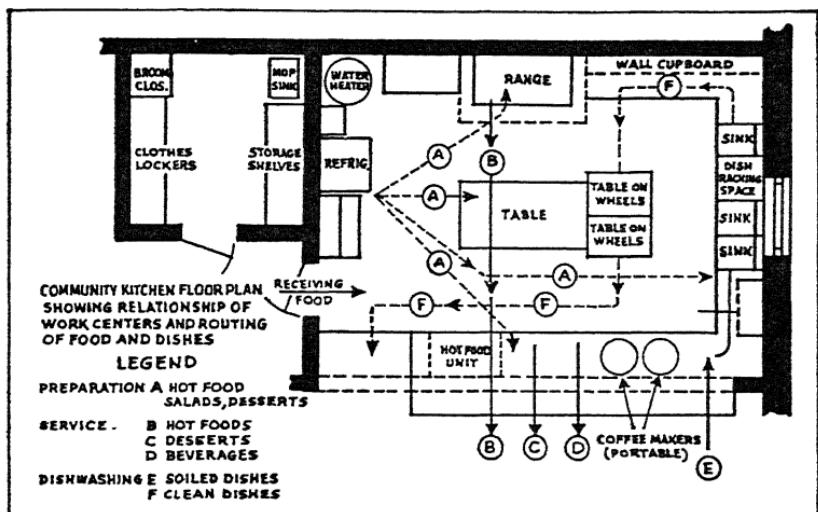
Much as we ladies would like a gleaming, stainless-steel kitchen—the best that money can buy—we have to take into consideration all the needs of our church. Will other causes go wanting if we put so much into our kitchen? Or can we, with a reasonable amount of stinting and fund raising, put in that de luxe kitchen which will be not only convenient and enduring, but beautiful? Sometimes a handsome bequest gives us a send-off toward making our dream kitchen come true, but even then, it is a financial undertaking of no mean proportions.

If you serve meals often for restaurant-size crowds, you definitely need the most convenient and efficient kitchen you can afford. A kitchen that is used by many different groups must be well planned, but have the simplest equipment possible. You should seldom go in for machinery—dishwashers, slicers, mixers—that are apt to be put out of order by misuse, unless there is a trained worker at each function to oversee the use of the machines. If you are putting in expensive equipment, be sure that it is to be used only by a specific kitchen committee who will serve at all functions over a period of at least a year or two.

A well-planned kitchen provides adequate equipment, effi-

ciently placed. That's a large order summed up in one short sentence. Adequate equipment includes large items such as ranges, sinks, tables, serving counters, and the small items, such as cooking utensils, china, glassware, silverware.

A well-planned kitchen provides a space for each activity and a place for each person to work. It provides space for adequate and efficient storage. It is planned to allow for an easy flow of work and to prevent workers from bumping into each other.



Courtesy N.Y. State College of Home Economics,  
Department of Institution Management

Planning the kitchen and dining room so that the waitresses never need go into the kitchen avoids confusion. The kitchen can be so arranged that when the dining-room committee people come to set the tables, they can get dishes, silverware and glasses without going into the kitchen, where food is being prepared. Some means of passing the soiled dishes from the dining room into the kitchen without the waitresses taking them should be planned. Both these things help to reduce fatigue and speed up the job of serving a community meal.

All the activities of serving meals to large groups should be taken into consideration when you plan the kitchen. Whether

you are planning a new kitchen or rearranging your present kitchen, the sequence in preparing and serving a meal should be well organized. Perhaps a few minor changes, like moving a table near the serving counter, at right angles to it, will accomplish faster service, because two lines of service may be used with workers on each side of this table. Perhaps a small pass-window can be cut in the wall or an ordinary door made into a Dutch door, so that the waitresses can pass the soiled dishes through without entering the kitchen.

Consider three major activities when you plan a community kitchen: (1) receiving food and supplies, (2) preparing and serving the food, (3) follow-up work, which consists of taking care of food that is left, washing the dishes and tidying the kitchen.

Study the floor plan for an ideal church kitchen which has been drawn up by New York State's Department of Institution Management, and you may see how this can be worked out in your own kitchen.

### WORK-SAVING CUPBOARDS

Installing new cupboards will simplify the work involved in preparing church meals. Study the cupboards you have and see if they are of the right dimensions and in the proper location to help instead of hinder.

1. Measure diameters of items to be stored, and make shelves only deep enough to accommodate them singly or in rows. Dinner-plate shelves need to be twenty inches deep to accommodate double rows of nine-inch plates.

2. Build cupboards whose top shelves are no higher than six feet from the floor, no section of which is wider than four feet, and no shelf deeper than eighteen or twenty inches inside. Keep in mind that you will have to stoop to get items stored lower than twenty-eight inches from the floor. These dimensions are within the easy reach of the woman of average height (5'3"-5'5").

3. Have wall cupboards which open all the way up on both kitchen and dining-room sides wherever possible. Here you can store all the items you need to set the table. Have a vertical file for trays and shallow drawers for linen and silver. Store dinner plates at counter level to prevent reaching or stooping for heavy stacks of plates. Store less used and lighter weight china and glassware above and below the dinner plates. Stack cups in two's, and cups and glasses of like size and shape in rows from front to back.

4. Store utensils and supplies at the center where they are first used; that is, those used with water, at the sink; those with heat, at the range; those used in mixing, at the cook's table. Duplicate sets of measuring spoons and cups, or can openers, will reduce needless kitchen travel and save time.

5. Use a cart or work table on wheels to save time and energy. Load it with plates and silverware, and wheel into the dining room when setting tables.

Remember, narrow shelves make it possible for you to see everything at a glance, and to pick up the article you want without moving others. Label all drawers with the contents.

### PROPER DISHWASHING

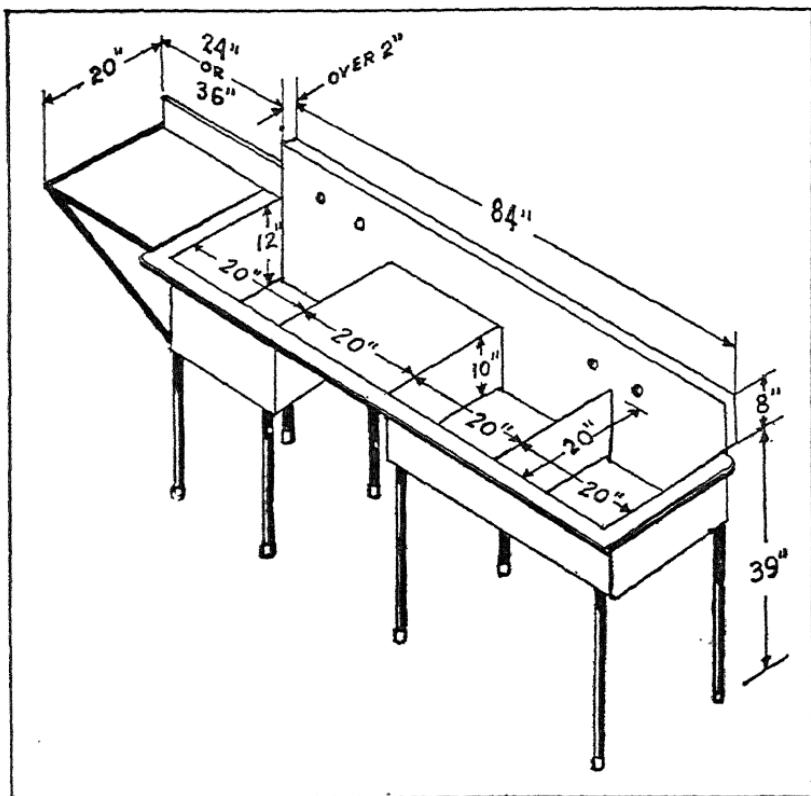
Let's bring our dishwashing methods up to date! New York State College of Home Economics at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, through its Department of Institution Management, gives the following rules for approved dishwashing procedures. How do your church kitchen methods measure up to these standards?

Necessities are: an ample supply of hot water; a three-compartment sink (or a two-compartment sink and a container for sanitizing glasses, cups and silver); a good detergent, and a sanitizing compound.

The kitchen should have its own hot-water heater and storage tank. Gas or kerosene burners heat water faster than coal, wood

or electricity, so that storage tanks heated with these fuels need only  $\frac{1}{2}$  gallon capacity for each meal served. Thus for 100 persons, a 50-gallon storage tank is ample.

The storage capacity of electrically heated tanks should be



An efficient, three-compartment sink for kitchen of average-size church.

$\frac{3}{4}$  to one gallon per meal served, because of the lower recovery rate.

The Department of Institution Management has designed a three-compartment sink for hand dishwashing. The drainboards are 38 to 40 inches high so that the level of the sink bottoms is not so low as to tire workers unduly. The wash and rinse tanks are 10 inches deep and the sanitizing tank 12 inches deep. All

tanks are 20 inches by 20 inches to conserve hot water and to conform to a woman's reach. A work space of 20 inches between the second and third compartment is provided to rack glasses, cups and silver so that they can be immersed in water 170 degrees to 180 degrees F., or the sanitizing solution.

The following are good hand-dishwashing procedures:

1. Scrape dishes to remove food scraps; rinse or pre-flush dishes; stack, separating the glasses, silver and china. Soak utensils which have held eggs, cheese, meats or starchy dishes in *cold* water. Soak utensils which have held fats and sugar or syrup in *hot* water.
2. Wash dishes in clean water as near to 125 degrees F. as possible. Use a detergent. Wash glassware, then silverware and china.
3. Rinse dishes in clean warm water.
4. Sanitize all dishes if possible, but at least the glasses, cups and silver, by one of the following two methods:

1. Immerse them in a sanitizing solution. The State Department of Health advises a quaternary ammonium compound, such as Roccal, Tetrosan, or Onyxide. In dilution, these germicides are colorless, odorless and will not irritate the skin or discolor the silver.

The dishwasher must know the capacity of the sink used in order to make up a solution which is strong enough to be effective. Figure the content of the sink in gallons this way: Multiply the dimensions of the sink in inches to give its content in cubic inches; divide the cubic contents by 231 to find the contents of the sink in gallons. *Example:* For sanitizing sink 20" x 20" x 12" (water up to 10-inch level)—20" x 20" x 10" equals 4000 cubic inches. Then, 4000 divided by 231 equals 17.3 gallons.

Directions for the use of one of the quaternary ammonium compounds says one ounce to 5 gallons of water is the correct proportion. The dishwasher would need to add about 3½ ounces or a scant half cup of the compound to his sink, which holds nearly 17½ gallons of water. At \$4 a gallon, 3½ ounces of the compound costs approximately 12c.

2. Immerse in clear water maintained at a temperature of 170 to 180 degrees F. To maintain this temperature, water must be held over direct heat. Place dishes in draining racks.

Dishes should be allowed to air-dry. Wiping them with towels is poor practice, for towels are not sanitary if used until they become wet, then dried and used again, without washing. If table space for clean dishes is so limited that there is not room for them to air-dry, properly laundered towels should be issued to dishwipers after each meal. As many as twenty-four towels are needed to dry dishes for one hundred persons. Dishes should be stored away from dust and flies. Covering dishes with clean towels is satisfactory.

### EFFICIENCY TIPS

*Do you* line the bottom of your oven with sheets of aluminum foil which can be removed and discarded when food bubbles over or spills? This saves much tiresome scrubbing, and keeps your oven new longer.

*Do you* use kitchen shears to mince parsley, mint, or chives, to cut up dates, raisins, marshmallows, and bacon, to dice bread cubes for dressing, or cut the rough edge off a pie crust? Try it and see how much easier it is.

*Do you* save attractively shaped jars in which baked beans, syrup, and other foods are sold to serve as vases or containers for flowers at individual luncheon tables?

## C H A P T E R 27



### *How to Face-lift Your Dining Hall*

Church meals, like those at home, can get into a pattern after a while that is oh-so-dull, unless we put forth a little extra time and effort to make them different. Have you taken a good look at your church dining area lately? No doubt it seems attractive enough with its tables all carefully set—tidy and trim the way you'd expect church supper tables to look.

But look more critically. Does it give you a let-down feeling of being like every banquet or group meal you've attended since childhood—colorless, neat, and very, very practical? Why not give some thought to a face-lift for your dining hall and surprise your congregation with a completely new look? Here are some tips on how to go about it.

Let the seamstresses of your group get busy making new coverings for all the tables. You've no idea how you can spruce up your room with tablecloths in good bold colors that will drape all the way to the floor. They don't have to be of an expensive material. Solid color percale or Indian head or dyed unbleached muslin will be fine. Simply stitch two or more lengths together to make them wide enough, and hem. Laundering these cloths need not be a problem in these days when so many own automatic washers and ironers, and you'll have an attractive investment for years of use. If you have tablecloths that still have wear left in them, dye them a bright new hue and see what a change like this does for the whole membership.

Choose a color that will make background harmony for most

of the year's holidays—or, if you're very ambitious, maybe you'll feel like making two complete sets of cloths in different colors. Pine green you could use with table decorations of gold, brown and orange for Thanksgiving; combine with silver or scarlet for your Christmas tables, lavender and lemon yellow for Easter, and soft shades of pink for Mother's Day. If you prefer cloths of vivid red use centerpieces of autumn golds for Thanksgiving, peppermint stick or green decorations for Christmas, blue and white for patriotic occasions like Washington's and Lincoln's birthdays and Fourth of July. Rich purple cloths could be combined with muted grape shades for an unusual Thanksgiving setting, and these would make a lovely background for holly and other greens at Christmas, nests of colored eggs at Easter, or May baskets in the spring.

Of course, these cloths should be saved for special occasions. If they are used for every church gathering, they will soon seem prosaic, unless you have more than one set and can change often.

Now collect a few basic items to produce effective modern arrangements for your tables. Most important is a "base," simply a flat rectangular or oval board of a size that is in proper proportion to your tables. It can be sanded, stained and rubbed with wax to a high polish, or simply painted black or white. Arrangements may be made directly on these bases, or you may use them as platforms for vases or bowls. Enlist the aid of some of your members who are adept at carpentry to make enough bases for all your tables, and store them in a convenient place.

A collection of driftwood, or bits of wood weathered into interesting shapes found on a tramp through the woods, will be useful to have on hand. This gives a novel effect to almost any arrangement.

For your Thanksgiving centerpieces good possibilities are cat-tails, ivy, clusters of garnet sumac berries and flaming bittersweet, sheaves of wheat, dried corn tassels, ears of corn, gourds, vegetables and fruits. The ladies of the Velpen, Indiana, Methodist church arranged evergreen sprays and bittersweet in half a

pumpkin shell for their Thanksgiving centerpieces. If you need water for flowers in such a container, sink a small kitchen pan in the pumpkin shell. Or, you might heap your shell with fruits, nuts and vegetables, allowing them to spill over, cornucopia fashion. Stick toothpicks into fruits and vegetables to help anchor them where you want them. Modeling clay is good to hold parts of your arrangement in place, particularly the pinholder. Don't forget the possibilities of plastic foam, too, as a holder for candles, flowers and greens.

The same basic rules of design used in arranging flowers apply to arrangements of vegetables and fruits. In general, however, arrangements should be kept low, rather than high. When arranging fruits and vegetables on a board base, the height of finished design should measure approximately once the width and once the length of the board. Leave a little more than a one-inch margin all around the board. Work out interesting combinations of different shapes and colors of fruits and vegetables. You could even lay golden shafts of wheat the length of your cloth and center the table with a mound of gourds and vegetables.

If you are short on funds for decorating, or if the dinner is a benefit, use a centerpiece that can be sold after the meal. Use a market basket placed on its side as the point of interest on each table. Or, if you have an extra-large arrangement to make, place two baskets back to back. Allow jars of home-canned fruits, vegetables and relishes to flow from each basket. Place the jars with apparent carelessness. Stand some erect and others on their sides in a full-length table decoration. Gather sprigs of evergreen for tuck-ins among the jars. Home-canned pickled beets, beans, peaches, chili sauce, pear preserves, relishes, mincemeat roll from the baskets in good variety of color. Add a few fresh fruits and bunches of carrots, a cauliflower, squash, or oiled turnips to give softness as they mingle in the evergreen. Your canned decorations will become the center of conversation when it is announced that they will be auctioned off after the dinner.

To give your entire dining hall an altogether new look, try arranging your tables differently. Do you always place your tables in long lines making a "U" formation around the room, or use your tables as separate units? For a change try a zig-zag arrangement. Place the narrow side of one table against the long side of the next, so that ends are even. This is calculated to give better conversational groupings, and, too, an attractive effect.

And what about those tables and chairs you've been using for your group luncheons and suppers? Is it time for a change there? If no other project is pressing, you might earn funds to replace outmoded equipment.

Sturdy folding tables, from restaurant supply houses, light-weight and easy to collapse, are ideal. Tubular steel legs are set so that they do not interfere with seating comfort and the masonite table tops are easy to wash. An average size table of 30" x 96" will seat approximately ten persons. A useful luxury is a truck on which ten or twelve of these tables may be stacked for easy handling and storage.

Whether you can afford this type, or must stick to plain boarded table tops laid across wooden saw-horses, satisfactory storage space is important when you want to transform your recreation room from a dining hall into an open area for programs, parties, or your annual bazaar. Ample closets should be planned to take care of folding tables and chairs when not in use, as well as to house tablecloths and decorative materials.

If you can't afford new folding chairs, give the ones you have a good going over. A new slat or rung, a screw here or a nail there may do wonders. Examine them for splinters, too. Sand down rough places, and there will be fewer snagged nylons at your next supper. Get up a scrub-bucket brigade and wash all the chairs thoroughly in a solution of washing soda and water. Use brushes to get into stubborn corners. Then a coat of paint that will harmonize or match the color of the new tablecloths you have chosen will make your chairs fresh and bright as new. Be sure to allow plenty of time for them to dry thoroughly!

The day before your next supper arrange your tables, lay the bright new cloths and prepare your modern centerpieces. Then take a look at the finished effect, and see if anyone will recognize this as the same old place where they've gathered for fellowship dinners, women's group luncheons, and banquets for so many years!

## C H A P T E R   2 8



### *Brighten That Corner!*

Is there a room in your church that is drab and wear-weary? The room where you ladies sew, a recreation spot for the young folks, the primary classroom, or a powder room? Spring is the time to organize your committees, arm yourselves with paint, fabric and ingenuity and get to work brightening up each corner of your church home.

What if you can't afford a decorator and new furniture? There is so much anybody can do with a few materials and a lot of energy to make an old room warm and cheerful. But before you plunge headlong into the job, here are a few pointers that may help you avoid disappointment in your finished results.

Have the decorating committee meet at least once to decide upon a color scheme and determine exactly what work is to be done. Meet again after you've collected swatches of material and color samples of paint, wallpaper and floor materials. When you have agreed on the color scheme best suited to your group, and have taken care to see that all the parts harmonize to bring out the effect you want, then apportion the tasks—to one group the draperies to make, to another the slip covers, carpentry projects to some of your handy menfolks, wall paint to one group, furniture painting to another, flooring to still another.

How can you tell what colors are right for your particular room? Decorators' rules decree that color should first of all tie everything together. Simplest way to do this is to use only one color for walls, woodwork, ceiling, floor and the background of

any figured fabric; then pick out one or two of the colors in the fabric pattern to accentuate in the furniture and decorations. If you keep walls, floor and ceiling subdued, you can splurge on color in draperies and furniture.

As to *which* colors—green, for some time a favorite in community rooms, has a dated look now. Newer shades are lovely yellows, muted grays—either cold or warm, depending on your room—and the latest decorator's color, which is so popular at the moment—sand, a rosy beige. All the blue shades go well with this new color—French blue, Alice blue, or many of the deeper tones. Blues go well with gray, too, and are restful. For contrast use white in the furniture. With butter yellow, browns and greens and cream are lovely. Nature colors are popular, too—the gray of driftwood, the brown of bark, the dull green of moss, with the orange of bittersweet for accent. Decorators today are saying that the red tones that were so commonly used by our grandparents are exciting and argumentative, and if you want to guarantee peace and calm among those using the room, avoid them except as accent notes. You can take this for what it is worth to you; certainly you'll avoid sharp criticism of the decorating scheme if you use something neither too heavy nor startling.

Remember that light travels downwards, and to give balance to your room the darkest colors should be lowest. In other words, the ceiling should be a light tone of whatever color you decide to use, the walls a little darker, and the floor darkest. One exception: To make a high ceilinged room look lower, paint it darker than the walls. The darker color will make it heavier and bring it down. A white ceiling gives a sense of the room being open at the top.

In choosing fabrics and wallpaper keep in mind the rule of using only one figured pattern in a room. If you want a variety of fabrics, choose a plain color, a plaid or a stripe, which includes one or more of the same colors in your figured fabric. You will achieve a striking effect if you use one fabric for your draperies and a different one for all the furniture. For instance, you might

choose a plain blue or blue and yellow striped material for the draperies, and do the chairs in a gay blue flowered chintz.

Clever tricks can add greater symmetry or beauty to an awkward room. Ugly pipes may be concealed by closed-in cupboards built over them, or a shelf hung with a ruffled skirt. There are endless uses for extra cupboard space, and a shelf may furnish places for potted plants to thrive, for teacups and refreshments to be set out, or for books or materials to be distributed. If pipes are low enough, the covering may be built as a bench against the wall. Make it comfortable with cushions, and it will add welcome seating capacity. Unsightly radiators set against one wall may be joined into a unit by building shelf space between them. Supporting beams in the middle of the floor, often found in basement rooms, can be used to advantage by building circular benches or tables around them.

If a wall has two separated windows you can get a new look by curtaining both windows and wall space together as a unit, hanging draw curtains across the whole space. The popular two-tier curtains are ideal for long windows, and can serve as blinds, too. Other curtaining and fabric-covered screens can conceal cooking corners or unsightly objects.

Must there be an ungainly upright piano? Give it a couple of coats of paint the same color as your wall, and see how it blends right into the background, no longer an eyesore. Furniture, too, of every vintage and style, takes pleasantly to an occasional coat of paint. If your furniture consists of aged discards of assorted types, paint it all one color to make it blend. Try white, for instance, on old wickers or even on heavy carved mahogany or mission oak, and you will be delighted at the fresh effect.

Plants offer many decorating possibilities. Placed on either side of a platform, two large, shiny-leaved plants give the effect of a boundary, when you do not want to mark it off any other way. Ferns and ivy can be used to fill empty window ledges or give a center of interest to a table or shelf. Wherever they are, plants give the warm sense of something alive and growing. If

you have a member who is especially fond of plants, a collection of begonias or some other specialty may be nurtured in your room. Old-fashioned plant stands that hold many pots are very popular with decorators today. Painted a fresh white or antique green, and furnished with many varieties of plants, one of these would give interest to a sunny corner of your Sunday-school room.

You may want to consider the possibilities of rubber or asphalt tile squares for your flooring. While it is true you won't find laying a rubber or asphalt tile floor quite as simple as it looks in the pictures, it is something that can be done by amateurs, and a group of your ambitious members can very well transform your floor into something clean and cheerful.

Here's how three churches dealt effectively with some specific problems: A dark basement room was made bright for the youngsters who were to use it in a Bronxville, New York, church by painting the ceiling and three walls white and the other side pale blue. A church member who was an architect painted twining vines climbing the white walls, giving the room a charming outdoor effect. Painted vines twined up the supports in the middle of the floor, too, so that they're no longer thought of as obstacles but as part of a leafy arbor. The child-size furniture is kept freshly painted in pale blue or gray and the awkward upright piano, painted pale blue to match the wall it stands against, is the delight of all, especially the children. The sexton's wife, who is also handy with a brush, decorated it with gay butterflies and flowers.

With the black marbleized asphalt tile floor of its basement sewing room, a Long Island church chose lemon yellow walls, chintz with a background of the same yellow, and splashy violet flowers with touches of blue for draperies. They painted all the furniture white, including even the sewing machines, and the ladies say they feel quite gay and smart sewing at trim white machines. Seat cushions for the white sewing chairs were covered in a plain fabric that picks up the violet in the draperies.

One lady donated her entire collection of African violets to decorate the window ledge. More women have come to sew in this pretty room.

A lavatory room at a Crestwood, New York, church was the bare, familiar combination of gunmetal woodwork and buff walls, until the women's group decided to make it into a powder room they could be proud of. Ugly pipes on either side of the wash basin were covered by a long shelf flush with the basin and extending all the way to the wall on either side. This was covered with masonite and a backsplash of masonite was used against the wall. (Linoleum or oil cloth could have been used instead.) They chose a gay wallpaper—a gray background on which pranced a carousel horse in white, shocking pink and aqua. This paper was used on two walls and the door panels, and the other two walls and woodwork were painted shocking pink. A ruffled skirt of plain aqua chintz now hangs along the shelf edge, giving a dressing-table effect and hiding the ugly pipes. A vertical mirror once on a door panel hangs horizontally over the washbasin, and provides a long area of view for many persons. Thumb-tacked around it is a ruffle of the aqua chintz which makes a charming frame. This would have been too gaudy for most rooms, but decorators' rules allow you to be as frivolous as you like with a powder room.

So what are we waiting for? Let's get to work!

P A R T   I I I



*Observing Special Occasions*



## C H A P T E R   2 9



### *A Sunrise Service of Your Own*

Has Easter come to have for you too much of the fashion-parade aspect? A sunrise service can offset this and uplift our thoughts in these troubled times. If it does not seem advisable to have a sunrise service for the whole congregation, you might work out a simple gathering of your own group for prayer and inspiration in the bright morning hours.

You might take a tip from the young people of one church who have evolved a unique Easter sunrise service of their own. At first these teen-agers, called the Westminster Fellowship, met by themselves in some public park which afforded a view of the sunrise, but in recent years they have shared their service with young people of an orphanage. Teen-agers of the home invite the Westminster group to share their farm grounds, replete with a beautiful view and picnic facilities. The Fellowship provides the service, which is conducted entirely by the young people themselves, except for a brief address by a guest speaker.

Leaving from the church Easter morning, they go by bus to the orphanage. The service is timed so that the sunrise will usually come as the speaker is addressing the group from a high platform overlooking the valley. Hymns are sung to the accompaniment of various instruments—a portable organ or perhaps a trumpet or a violin.

Each year the group—numbering approximately sixty-five altogether—works out the details of both an outdoor and an indoor plan, in case of bad weather, although only once have they

had to use the indoor plan. Then the service was conducted before a large picture window overlooking the valley.

After the service, breakfast is cooked in the open. Each of the two young people's groups furnishes its own food—oranges, rolls and milk, bacon, eggs and coffee. They leave at 9 a.m., allowing plenty of time before the regular church service at 11 a.m.

If this seems a large undertaking, you might divide your society into groups of from twelve to twenty, which could be comfortably accommodated in individual homes. Those whose houses are suitable will probably offer them for the occasion. Especially appropriate are homes with windows commanding a view of the sunrise. Hymns, prayers, Scripture reading and an inspirational message can be prepared by members of the group.

Easter is apt to be a chilly morning. If you have either an outdoor or an indoor sunrise service, what would be more heartening than an Easter breakfast for those who attend? Members will appreciate the sense of fellowship in breakfasting together, rather than departing to their own homes. Break up your society into friendly groups, remembering to include in your count the husbands and children who may be attending the service with each of your members. Allow for a few extras from each home, too, and make it clear that any member may extend an invitation to breakfast to any newcomer whom she may see at the service.

While one member offers her home for the morning, it would be wise to give two other hostesses charge of planning and serving the food, so that the burden need not be too great for any one person.

Help-yourself service is highly satisfactory for this kind of gathering. Lay out an attractive array of breakfast dishes, and allow everybody to carry his own plate to card tables set up about the house. For a very simple menu arrange a large chop bowl with assorted fruits and dry cereals. Serve with plenty of cream and sugar, hot cross buns and coffee. (If your buns are from the baker's, warm in the oven before serving. Be sure your hot cross buns are *hot!*)

Your hostess may prefer to invite her guests right into the

kitchen to help themselves from the stove. Or you might collect various electrical appliances and serve a complete hot breakfast from your buffet table. A hot plate will keep a pot of coffee always at serving temperature. Use a chafing dish to keep oatmeal or other cereals warm. On an electric grill you can scramble eggs to order, frizzle ham or crisp bacon, make pancakes or French toast. For a special Easter breakfast treat, serve bananas between slices of golden French toast, smother the whole with maple syrup, jelly, or confectioners' sugar.

You will want a centerpiece of fresh spring flowers for your buffet table, or lovely colored Easter eggs piled on fresh green leaves in a Victorian milk-glass compote dish make another pretty centerpiece. You might even like to make place cards of Easter eggs, with names of guests written on the eggs with a crayon before dipping them in the dye.

### LET'S CAROL FOR EASTER!

What a memorable experience—to be awakened early Easter morning by clear young voices singing of Easter gladness!

Have you ever tried Easter caroling? It's a new idea, fast taking hold throughout the country. Why not be the first group in your community to introduce this idea? There are many who cannot attend Easter services either indoors or outdoors, and bringing the Easter message by means of carols to homes, hospitals and other institutions is a lovely thought.

The early morning hours of Easter Sunday are most effective for caroling; they recall the wonder of the early morning discovery of the Resurrection. Your church choirs and young peoples' societies may make up the caroling groups, which can start at the appointed hour of 6 A.M., and continue until just before church time. Then have the singers gather at the church and sing again with the congregation, as an effective prelude to the service, either outdoors or in.

Your program may be simple or elaborate. It may consist only of the carols, a solo, a prayer and a short address. Or you may

dramatize the Easter story with music or even a really ambitious pageant.

The carolers will present an interesting effect if they are clothed in vestments.

Suitable hymns include: "Christ the Lord is Risen Today," words by Charles Wesley, music from "Lyra Davidica"; "The Strife is O'er; The Battle's Done," from the Latin, arranged from Palestrina; "How Firm a Foundation," from Rippon's Selections, Wade's Cantus Diversi; "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," words by Edward Perronet, music by Oliver Holden; "Crown Him with Many Crowns," words by Matthew Bridges, music by George J. Elvey; and "Come Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain," translated by John M. Neale, music by Arthur S. Sullivan.

The H. W. Gray Co., 159 E. 48th St., New York City, publishes several 15c collections of Easter carols. For further material for planning an Easter service address National Recreation Association, 315 Fourth Ave., New York 10, New York. Their pamphlets include: *An Easter Processional and Community Carol Program* (M.B. 2031), 10 cents, and *Program Suggestions for Easter* (M.P. 244), a bibliography listing plays, pageants, pantomimes and services of worship, 15 cents.

## C H A P T E R   3 0



### *Celebrate Easter with a Pageant*

Uplifting to a war-weary generation is the way you want your Easter observance to be. There's no better way of achieving this than with a pageant.

Use a short pageant as an interlude in your outdoor Easter sunrise service or as part of an indoor service. A full-length pageant can be a special event any time during the week preceding Easter. Given outdoors in a lovely natural setting, an Easter pageant might become an annual community affair, with other churches participating.

Wouldn't the resurrection theme be a fitting one with which to pay tribute to the war dead of your community? Almost any Easter pageant you choose could be concluded with a final scene in which little children carrying wreaths appear, and as the names of the dead to be honored are called, a child places a wreath at the foot of the cross in your sanctuary. "Onward, Christian Soldiers" could be played as accompaniment to this scene, and it could be concluded with the words from Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, "We here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain."

In organizing your pageant you will first need to appoint a capable executive staff. This may consist of stage manager, prompter, business manager, stage carpenter, electrician, chairman of costume committee, chairman of property committee, chairman of publicity committee, and treasurer.

Then you must decide upon the script. Many types of

pageants are available from various play publishing concerns, or with some imagination you can improvise your own. There are Easter pageants especially for children, for adults and children, some requiring no rehearsals, and one using shadow scenes. Two dramatic worship services for Easter contained in the book, *Youth Programs for Special Occasions* by Ruth Schroeder, Abingdon-Cokesbury, could be converted into pageants.

Make a complete "prompt copy" of your text for the stage manager. It should include every detail, and every change should be added as soon as it is made. This copy should contain every word of the text, typed on heavy paper, widely spaced and with broad margins. Space on the opposite page can be used for stage directions. Or, you may let your actors move as they may be directed by instinct, with only a brief reminder about keeping within the line of vision and distributing themselves about the stage.

There should be pages in your prompt book listing properties, brief descriptions of costumes, names, addresses, telephone numbers of the cast, similar data about committee members, and dates of rehearsals. When music is to be used, indicate title, name of composer and publisher at the top of the page where it occurs. Mark a blue pencil line down the left margin to indicate when music should begin and stop. If you are using lighting, similar markings in red can be used to indicate the proper lights to be used.

An efficient stenographer in your group can organize this prompt book into a form which will smooth out production for all concerned. If possible, not only the stage director should have a copy, but also the prompter, lighting man and musical director.

If you are planning an outdoor pageant, drive out to every available site and study its suitability. A natural amphitheater is what you want to look for. Then you can either place your audience on rising ground, looking down onto a level field, or you can use the rising ground for your stage. Choose a spot where dwelling houses will not enter into the line of vision and detract from the effect. Trees, hillside, and water all improve

acoustics, and also add to the beauty. Remember that the place must be easily accessible, not only for the audience but for rehearsals. For a sunrise service you must consider the position of the sun. Its entrance can be dramatic, if planned so that it rises directly behind your crosses or at the very center of the stage. For an outdoor program you must also consider problems of parking space, suitable dressing rooms for your cast, and the like.

If your pageant is not too long, the audience can stand or sit on mats or blankets which they bring themselves. If the ground is level, rented camp chairs will be satisfactory. Building seats is one of the greatest expenses of a pageant, even with the cheapest construction. If you should decide they are necessary, your committee should ask local carpenters to present estimates before you proceed.

For an indoor performance the church sanctuary can probably be used just as it is. To give a suitable background to a platform or stage the simplest thing is curtaining. This does not eliminate any floor space and gives a neutral setting to any scene. Cotton flannel or sateen are inexpensive materials good for temporary curtains; poplin or monk's cloth may be chosen for permanent ones. Light gray-green, gray-blue or gray are best to set off costume colors. Tack curtains in folds against the walls, or hang on rings run on iron pipe, which a plumber can install for you. For an outdoor effect you may interweave chicken wire with fir twigs and place small trees on either side.

Easter background scenery which will fill the entire wall or stage of the average church or auditorium may be ordered from various concerns. Separate scenes of the Easter story reproduced in natural colors on heavy paper give an appropriate background.

A set of platforms which can be used to give various heights to the groupings of your pageant are a good investment for any church. Have a carpenter build a number of large, sturdy wooden boxes of different sizes which can be moved about the stage at will, or piled on top of each other for various effects. They may also be used to give height to the back rows when your choir or Sunday-school children are performing. Or they

may become flower stands for weddings and other occasions. They can be painted the same neutral color as your stage curtains or repainted to suit each function for which they are used. They can double in scenes as house steps, rocks, pedestals, stools or furniture.

Use aisles and any stairs leading up to the platform from the audience for effective entrances in your pageant. Balconies or choir lofts can be put to good use in creating thrilling effects. Remember that the pageant is a spectacle, and everything that can add drama or beauty is important.

Both instrumental and vocal music should have a prominent part. Your choir and organ are perfect for the indoor pageant. Outdoors you may use a portable organ, an orchestra, band, or a smaller vocal ensemble, in addition to choral singing. Recordings and a loud speaker might be experimented with. Often the audience can be counted on to furnish part of the music, through the singing of familiar hymns.

Music may be used at intervals when the text demands it, or it may run without a break through the whole production, one tune blending into another, sometimes assuming importance and other times continuing as subdued background to the action and dialogue.

For your costumes choose complementary colors that will give interesting and lovely contrasts. You can heighten the emotion of a scene by using warm colors (red, orange, yellow) when the mood is joyous, lively, or exciting, and cool colors (green, blue, violet) when the feeling is sad, thoughtful or restful. Avoid too much white. In Bible times the three primary colors were worn in rich combinations of woven designs and embroideries.

For a quick production you may have costumes left from a Christmas pageant which will fit into your plans. Other costumes may be rented or borrowed. For best effects, however, make your costumes for the occasion. Canvass your church membership for discarded sheets, net curtains and drapery materials to be dyed and made into costumes. Dyeing is highly satisfactory, for you can get the exact colors you desire. Other inexpensive costume fabrics are cheesecloth, mosquito netting, cottons, muslins,

canton flannel, cotton crepe, and sateen. Crepe paper has many possibilities for costuming, but should not be used in conjunction with cloth costumes.

Make armor out of burlap painted with the cheapest aluminum paint mixed with thinned glue. Make chain armor of coarse knitted goods painted silver. Or cut rows of thin, scalloped cardboard, painted silver and sewed in overlapping rows to a foundation of sheeting dyed gray. For helmets use the crowns of derby hats, attaching a visor of cardboard, and paint the whole thing silver.

Organize your costume making so that it can be done wholesale by a group of volunteer seamstresses who meet and work together. Co-operative sewing with supervision is more satisfactory than sending costumes home to be made. Have one person make mantles, another headdresses, a third stitch long seams which a fourth is basting, and so on.

Lighting, if it is needed for an indoor pageant, is something for your menfolk to work out. Perhaps your church auditorium has its own footlights, border and bunch lights already installed. Then the task is simple. For an outdoor pageant use daylight. How effective would be a pageant beginning with the glorious rising of the sun and the words, "In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary . . ."

Rehearsals will be determined by the type of pageant you choose to present. If time is limited choose something simple—action accompanied by a reader and some music—which will require only one or two rehearsals.

A more elaborate pageant may include separate episodes with dialogue held together by a framework of pantomime, processions, and music. The casts of the separate episodes can then rehearse at their convenience, and two or three rehearsals of the entire cast will be all that is necessary.

By using all the suggestions indicated here you can put on a modest Easter pageant in a short time. But we have given you ideas for bigger pageants, too. If you wish to do it on a larger scale a year ahead is not a bit too early to start the wheels turning.

## C H A P T E R 31

*Pause for Mother's Day*

Time out for sentiment and fun and gestures of endearment toward our moms!

Can we afford to pause in our serious pursuits and enjoy something with a light touch? To call up tender memories and renew appreciation—to celebrate Mother's Day? Yes, but let's steer clear of the crass commercialism with which this day has become identified.

It doesn't take much time or effort to prepare a group luncheon, an afternoon dessert party, or a reception in honor of our mothers—and it adds, oh so much, to the warmth of living.

If a program is important to your scheme, try a procession of "mothers of the world." This can be simply developed, and is very effective. Have women dress to represent mothers of different nationalities with their babies, and let them parade one at a time across a platform. If a mother can carry her own live baby, it will be ideal; otherwise dolls will probably work out best. As each mother appears, have a pianist accompany her with music, preferably a lullaby, from the land she represents. Your local library will help you trace down the proper music.

Historical costumes may be easier to secure, so you might prefer "American mothers through the years." If you can locate a few antique cradles, carriages, or other "props," little tableaux would be nice. All the setting you need is a large rectangular outline representing a gilt picture frame. Your performers form a "picture" within the frame, holding their pose while the cur-

tains are opened and closed over the scene. Elaborate baby clothes of other years would be most effective displayed in this way. And if some children's garments of the past are available, an older child or two might pose with mothers and babies.

Your first tableau, for instance, might be a Pilgrim mother, rocking her cradle with one foot while she runs her spinning wheel with the other. Then you might show a southern plantation mother in her crinolines bending over a lovely rosewood cradle; a Negro mammy rocking her little pickaninny; a frontier mother with her baby in one arm and a musket in the other; a "gay nineties" mother pushing her baby in an ornate perambulator with fringed umbrella hood; a mother of World War I times standing beside a service star flag; and so on.

Appropriate poems on motherhood and family life might be read as accompaniment to these scenes, and your minister will doubtless be on hand to say a few words or offer a prayer.

For a group luncheon or afternoon dessert party a make-it-yourself menu is a novel stunt and gives everybody the fun of taking her choice. Plan a toss-your-own salad for a luncheon gathering. Arrange a large bowl of orange and grapefruit sections mixed with lettuce, chicory, endive, watercress and French dressing. Or, if you prefer, heap greens on a tray with scallions, carrot sticks and radishes. Arrange overlapping orange slices around the edge of your serving platter, and pile grapefruit sections in the center. In separate bowls serve shrimp, slivered chicken, tongue, ham or cheese. You might set out these dishes on a buffet and let guests make their own selections, or set them on service carts and push them around the dining room, letting each help herself from the cart.

You might instead serve slices of buttered toast, crackers, and two or three creamed dishes, letting everyone make up her own preference. You might have one bowl of savory Welsh rarebit, another of creamed tuna or haddock and peas, and a third of creamed chipped beef.

Let the dessert be make-it-yourself style, too. Cut block-shaped ice cream into four cubes. Place a cube on a dish for each person

to be served. On a table or service cart line up dainty individual bowls filled with yummy sundae fixings, such as crushed pineapple, sliced bananas, chopped nuts, maraschino cherries, whipped cream, chocolate sauce, strawberries. Let folks concoct sundaes as rich or plain as their fancies dictate.

Song services or musical programs are especially suitable as entertainment for a tea or reception. An instrumental trio can render some musical selections appropriate to Mother's Day, and you might also have a vocal soloist, duet, trio or quartet.

For a tea or reception the refreshment committee should plan dainty sandwiches, cupcakes, cookies, nuts and mints, things that can be conveniently eaten with the fingers.

A mother-daughter banquet is the answer for a young people's group, for it helps to build up fellowship between mothers and daughters who are too apt to grow apart at this age. Fun is important to such a party, and one way to get it is through singing familiar songs in unison. A clever stunt is to type the words of a song suitable to the occasion on file cards. Cut each card into four pieces and distribute two pieces to mothers, two to daughters. Mothers and daughters must match cards, and the four who have the words of the same song must sing it together as a quartet. No one needs to be a good singer; in fact, it will be more fun if they aren't.

Let mothers and daughters take turns waiting on each other at the banquet. At a signal from the toastmistress, for instance, all the daughters should get up and carry the first course dishes to the kitchen, returning with the main course, which has been served on plates. At the end of the main course the toastmistress gives another signal, at which the mothers carry off these plates and return with dessert. This will solve the help problem, too.

Popular musical selections for Mother's Day include: "My Old Kentucky Home," "Mother Macree," "Sweet and Low," "Home Sweet Home," "The Last Rose of Summer," "Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms," "Our Fathers

Built This City," "I Want a Girl Just Like the Girl," "Silver Threads Among the Gold," "Annie Laurie," "The Little Gray Home in the West," "The Old Oaken Bucket," "Swanee River."

Others are "Mother o' Mine" (quartet), Kipling-Burleigh; "Mother of Mine" (quartet), Brown-Burleigh-O'Hare; "My Mother" (quartet), Wagstaff-White-Barlow; "Lullaby" (quartet), Brahms-Zander; and "Those Songs My Mother Used to Sing" (soprano solo), Dvořák.

## C H A P T E R 3 2



### *All Honor to Mother*

May brings the annual occasion to pay our mothers the tribute that is really due them every day of the year. But what more suitable season could we find for Mother's Day than this month when all nature is bursting with the joy of living? Possibly you're planning a mother-and-daughter banquet, and want an idea to give it new interest. You might try the "share-a-mother" theme this year.

There must be many members of your church who would love to be included in your banquet, even though their mothers live too far away to be present, or have passed on. Wouldn't it be a nice gesture to include them by having each mother and daughter choose a "mother-less" individual to bring along? Then, at your table you might have two "daughters," one seated on either side of each mother.

The American "Mother of the Year" may not be a member of your church, but you might choose your own Mother of the Year, and crown her queen at your banquet. An official voting slip could be secured by each member of your church from your clerk, who would allow one slip to each member, crossing off the member's name when he had received his slip. These slips could be dropped into a sealed ballot box, and only the banquet committee would know in advance who had been chosen Mother of the Year. A surprise announcement will heighten interest in attending. Perhaps you will want to provide gifts for the lady of the day. If you think the surprise of being named Mother of

the Year will prove too much of a shock, you had better let her know in advance that she is to be so honored.

Balloting slips should tell the number of children the candidate for Mother of the Year has, list her accomplishments and give reasons why she deserves the honor. If there is no election by means of this church-wide balloting, a satisfactory committee, including the minister, should decide the winner.

The introduction of the Mother of the Year and listing of her qualifications will take up much of the "speech" time at your banquet, but some time should also be devoted to the other mothers present. Let each one rise in turn and introduce her own daughter and her daughter "adopted" for the day, and in so doing give one characteristic she has in common with each. These may be serious or humorous, and will give opportunity for some sage comment or lively witticisms, depending on the speaker. She may say, for instance, that she shares with one daughter the trait of always being a little late, and with the other her love of a bargain. Or she may indicate that she is just as eager as one daughter to find a choice piece to add to her antique collection, and her other daughter loves to read stories to her children, just as she always loved to read to her family. Another way to introduce each mother is to let each one tell her pet theory of the proper way to raise children. "Teach them to make their own decisions early," one will say. "Never say 'no' when it's possible to say 'yes,'" and so on.

Recognition of the contribution of Miss Anna M. Jarvis, the founder and originator of Mother's Day, who died in 1948, would be suitable at your banquet. Or you might prefer it as a special Mother's Day observance for your church or group meeting. A simple pageant could be developed featuring the highlights of her life. Here is a little historical background from which your pageant may be worked out.

In tribute to her mother, Miss Jarvis, a native of West Virginia, resolved to set aside a day in May of each year as a memorial. On that day she selected a white flower and wore it as a fitting emblem of love and devotion between mother and

child. When her friends learned about it, she told them she was going to observe the same day each year. They, too, became interested and asked her to arrange a service in which their entire community might have a part. While planning this memorial meeting to her mother the thought came to her, "Why not make it a national celebration in commemoration of the debt owed to Mother—a tribute of deference and respect not only to absent mothers but to all mothers and the home?"

The first observance of Mother's Day was in Philadelphia, May 10, 1908. The day soon became recognized by other cities in the state of Pennsylvania and elsewhere. On May 9, 1914, following the adoption of a resolution by Congress, President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation declaring that the second Sunday in May should be observed as Mother's Day, and calling upon government officials to display on this day the American flag.

Since then, the observance of Mother's Day has spread to all parts of Europe, to Japan, China, Africa, Palestine and other countries. Mexico was the first Latin country to observe Mother's Day. Here May 10th is observed every year, regardless of what day it falls on. Flowers on Mother's Day are more plentiful in Mexico than in the United States. Brown-skinned Indian girls bring them from the scenic suburb, Xochimilco, to Mexico City. Carnations and other flowers are sold on the streets, the money going to the Red Cross.

You, too, will want to make your Mother's Day activities vibrant with flowers, so that Mother may know that she makes you think of beauty, freshness and color. Try "tussie-mussies" for delightful variety in your floral decorations. Maybe you know "tussie-mussies" better by their other name, "nosegays"—dainty, styled bouquets. But for Mother's Day you will find it fun to call them "tussie-mussies," which means a tight cluster or knot of flowers. Tussie-mussies must be beautiful both to sight and scent, as they were originally intended to be carried in the hand and sniffed occasionally. In early Victorian days they were also used as expressions of tender sentiment, for the language of

flowers was popular then, and a young man might declare his love by choosing the right flowers and combining them in the form of a tussie-mussie, placing in the center the flower with the most important meaning.

Because it is more expressive of sentiment, the tussie-mussie seems an ideal flower arrangement for Mother's Day. You may make one up easily of flowers from your garden, or have the florist do it for you. Select the flowers to be used, taking care to include at least one flower with decided fragrance—violets, lilies of the valley, stocks, tuberoses. Cut stems to fairly uniform length. Choose a special flower, such as a rose, or a group of flowers tied tight, for your center. Surround it with flowers of a strongly contrasting color, such as pansies, and tie securely with string or wire. Build up your bouquet in concentric circles, each a contrasting color, placing each circle somewhat lower than the center. Tie after the addition of each circle.

When all rows have been assembled and tied, slip the stems through a lace paper holder. For a natural border use ivy leaves instead of lace paper for the last circle of your tussie, tying in place as before. You may leave the stem ends loose for a natural effect, or bind with ribbon or aluminum foil. Ribbon streamers are pretty. Leave stems unbound and cut them short if you wish to use your tussie-mussie as a table centerpiece. Arrange it in a shallow dish or pan filled with moist (not soupy) sand. Use a pencil to get slender stems into place in the sand. Tiny tussies are ideal favors and one set at the place of each mother at your banquet would make sufficient floral decoration and give each one a remembrance to take home. The little ones are fashionable worn as corsages on the shoulder or belt, in the hair or pinned to a handbag. Almost any flower can be used in making these sweet nosegays—cornflowers, geraniums, sweet william, shasta daisies, carnations, nasturtiums. Sprays of baby's breath give delicacy to an arrangement. The trick is to press all the blossoms close together to make a solidly packed knot of fragrance and color.

Carry out your floral motif even to the refreshments. Try

decorating your cake with real live flowers. When frosting the cake insert short sticks of macaroni at intervals around the top and sides of the cake. At the last moment you may tuck tiny blossoms, which have been prepared in advance with short stems, into the macaroni holes. Cupcakes could have just one piece of macaroni in the center of each to hold a fresh little blossom.

Or decorate your cake with gumdrop blossoms. Slice red or pink gumdrops very thin with a sharp knife dipped in hot water. Arrange pieces of gumdrops on the top of your cake as petals of a flower. Put pieces of tinted cocoanut in the center of each flower, and use the colored cocoanut about the sides of the cake. To tint cocoanut put one or two cups of shredded cocoanut in a bowl. Mix two tablespoons of water with two teaspoons edible food coloring. Sprinkle tinted water over cocoanut a few drops at a time. Mix lightly until color is evenly distributed through cocoanut. Continue adding colored water until cocoanut is desired tint. Lay colored cocoanut on paper towel to dry before putting on cake.

## C H A P T E R   3 3



### *Mother-Daughter Style Show*

Pretty clothes are one interest mothers and daughters are sure to have in common. Why not use them to cement mother-and-daughter relations? Give a mother-daughter style show. Everything should be done as teamwork—mothers and daughters paired off to model the clothes, mother and daughter commentators, mothers and daughters acting jointly on committees, serving refreshments—even a mother-daughter duet to provide music. Working together to make such an event a success, mothers and daughters will find understanding deepening and friendship flourishing.

You might give your fashion show as a program for a mother-daughter luncheon the Saturday before Mother's day, or plan a more elaborate show to give in the fall just before girls go off to college.

A "sew-show" of garments made by mothers and daughters at home is one possibility you will want to consider instead of the usual plan of showing ready-made clothes from shops. Particularly if your program is to be a short one for a small audience, this is a good idea, since stores might not feel it worth their while to loan garments unless it is to be a large gathering, and the program to last as much as forty-five minutes.

A "topper's parade" is another simple version of the style show. Only headgear is exhibited, and models wear plain—preferably black or navy blue—dresses in order to emphasize the importance of their hats. Or, they may appear in a picture frame

arrangement, which will eliminate all but the heads of the models, yet allow them to turn around and show all views of the hat. For an amusing touch some old-fashioned hats may be shown in contrast with the new; mamma, perhaps, modeling the old styles, and daughter the new. Or, some funny old-fashioned men's styles would add humor.

Finally, you may want to hire a hall and go all out for a real style show, as did the United Churches of Hot Springs, South Dakota, one spring. They took the city auditorium for the event, and set up tables around the hall with pretty lunch cloths and napkins. Centering each table was a white candle in a glass holder with pastel-colored crepe-paper streamers fastened in the top to represent a Maypole. For the punch table a larger Maypole was fashioned from a fluorescent light bulb fitted into a wooden block with similar streamers.

As guests entered, they filed past the punch table for fruit punch and fancy cookies. They took their food to a table of their choice, from which they later watched the style show. Music was provided before the program by a pianist and violinist. Recordings were used for soft background music during the show. The stage was decorated to represent the yard of a house with a picket fence and crepe-paper flowers. A large umbrella, lawn chairs and table provided furnishings. Two ladies stood in the yard, visiting with each model and commenting on the garments as the church members displayed them by walking across the stage, down the steps and among the tables.

Here is your inspiration; now, let's get down to particulars. To plan a style show as a mother-and-daughter event, hold a meeting of your women's group, inviting daughters of members to be present. Talk over the idea, and see how many mother-and-daughter combinations would like to act as models, how many would prefer to handle arrangements, such as store contacts, script writing, model directing, refreshments and publicity. Seek out some professional help in making your show a success. Possibilities are your local home demonstration agent, home economics

instructors, or local merchants. If too many would like to be models, these professionals can make an impartial choice of those who will be most suitable.

Your committee for contacting stores must go into action first, making arrangements with managers for the use of garments in your show. To interest stores in your idea you will need to tell them how many mothers and daughters will take part, what size audience you will draw, how you intend to publicize your show. Be sure your plans are well worked out before you approach a manager, or you will give the impression you want the store to do it all.

Later, mothers and daughters who are to model will go into the shops and try on clothes to find the outfits most becoming to them. Stores will probably send a representative the day of the show to help models get clothes on "just so."

The script-writing committee is in charge of working out an interesting and dramatic program. Take a list of the mothers and daughters scheduled to perform. Decide what type of clothing each can model most effectively, and work out an interesting sequence leading from housedresses and sportswear to party dresses. Include clothes for all age groups—children and teenagers up to the young matron and more mature woman—avoiding monotony and appealing to the wide range of ages represented by your mothers and daughters.

Dream up things for models to carry to dramatize the purpose of each outfit, such as an open road map, shopping bag, picnic lunch case, mixing bowl, or theater program. Having something to hold helps unprofessional models keep their hands quiet.

Think what special features you can work in to add interest. Twins of any age level, either mothers or daughters, might be a highlight. Or a family of little girls ranging upwards like stairs-steps. Toddlers are sure-fire attention-getters—and a few might be included with their mothers. Or a three-generation group—grandma, mother and daughter. A wedding scene can be used to climax the performance—with daughter dressed as the bride,

mother in suitable gown, and little sister as flower girl. This would be especially exciting if the daughter happened to be engaged.

When specific outfits have been chosen for the show, prepare descriptive paragraphs about each with a little personal information about the mothers and daughters who are to model them. Information about garments may be taken from their attached tags, and will include a mention of specific style features that are good this season, name of the fabric, range of colors, price, store where it may be purchased, and possibly size range.

Copies of the script should be prepared for commentators and other committee chairmen. Choose an outstanding mother and daughter with a great deal of personality and likeable voices to serve as commentators. If they are able to chat pleasantly, referring to the script for specific information, but putting it into their own words, so much the better. Otherwise, they may give a conversational effect by reading the carefully prepared script.

There should be a musical advisor on the script-writing committee to co-ordinate theme songs with the script that will aid in describing the clothing. For instance, a travel outfit might be accompanied by "In My Merry Oldsmobile," and the appearance of children will be heralded with nursery-rhyme music. Much depends, however, on whether you choose recordings, piano, organ or instrumental background music.

Musicians should be combined mother-and-daughter teams, whether they are a piano or organ duet, or two sets of mothers and daughters playing an instrumental quartet.

The model-directing committee will hold one or two rehearsals to show models how to walk on stage. If you can secure professional help here, you can dispense with a committee. Good posture can be checked by flattening the body against a wall, tucking the hips under, and raising the head. When the model is standing correctly, it is not difficult to learn to walk with a relaxed air, legs swinging straight from hips. Mannerisms and stiffness may be eliminated by carrying something.

Have models turn around on stage in any way that comes naturally to them. Rest one foot at a slight angle from the other when standing still. It is highly important for models to look as though they enjoyed what they are doing. A forced smile is better than none, and can't be distinguished in the audience from a real one.

Decide with the script-writing committee how models should enter and exit—whether mother and daughter should come on together, and one stand back while the other shows her outfit; or whether a mother should come on stage before her daughter, and wait while the daughter models, so that they may go off together. Focus attention on one model at a time to avoid a three-ring-circus effect.

Members of the model-directing committee should be in the dressing room during the performance to check each model's appearance—zipper closings, stocking seams and belts. For modeling, belts should be worn over belt loops and have ends pointing toward the left side. Be sure models are provided with proper accessories. Gloves should be worn instead of carried, and always go with hats and purses.

Staging and lighting can be as elaborate or as simple as you choose. Microphone, lights, scenery, and stage settings may be borrowed or rented from other churches, stores, or theaters, if you do not have what you need. Try out different lighting effects, remembering that amber and rose lights are flattering, while deep blues and greens give a weird effect. A movable spotlight to follow models about the stage is effective.

Plan ample space for models to change clothing. Racks for hanging up garments are important. Set up folding tables for accessories and properties. Provide a full-view mirror, as well as mirrors and good lighting for doing make-ups.

Good publicity is vital to make merchants feel it worth their while to loan garments. Attention-getting posters should be displayed in store windows, libraries, schools. If you have an amateur photographer among your membership, get him to take a few pictures of mother-and-daughter teams in the clothes they

will wear and feature them on the posters. Local newspapers may even want to publish such pictures.

Feature the mother and daughter aspect of your style show in well-written news stories, which you will provide the newspapers well in advance of the show date. Try to get it announced on local radio stations, or an interview with a representative mother and daughter. If you give newspapers and radio stations special invitations to your show, you will probably get follow-up stories as well. Bring the show to the attention of all clubs and organizations of your community by sending letters to presidents of other church groups, schools, P.T.A.'s, farm bureau organizations and women's clubs.



## *How to Observe Thanksgiving*

In our haste to get on with Christmas plans, let us not brush over Thanksgiving lightly. Let us duly observe this beautiful American custom of thanking the Giver of all good for His blessings.

An international Thanksgiving dinner is one way of emphasizing this custom to newcomers and visitors to our shores, explaining Thanksgiving to them as our gratitude for being able to worship God in our own individual ways and recognizing all men as created equal.

The First Methodist Church of Penn Yan, New York, inaugurated this idea as a means of helping to bridge the gap of customs and culture that would separate members of a community.

Every American community is made up of a variety of nationalities, and these, together with displaced persons who have come from abroad, should provide any church with material for carrying out the same sort of program.

The Penn Yan church drew largely from the foreign students of its nearby Keuka College. The pastor served as toastmaster, and the keynote address was given by the dean of Keuka College. She stressed the thought that "foreigners" are persons just like us spiritually, and that "all people are individuals with feelings and talents, not mere members of a nationality or race."

Students from Malaya, Latvia, The Netherlands and Sweden told "How We Do Things in Our Country." A sixteen-year-old boy who recently arrived from Holland played several piano

solo. A Chinese and a Czechoslovakian sang native folk songs. Well-known songs of other nations, the words of which were given in mimeographed programs, were sung in unison. Included were "America"; "Sarasponda," a Dutch spinning song; "Over the Meadow," a Czech walking song; "Funiculi, Funicula," the Italian melody; and "Kookaburra," an Australian round.

Careful planning made this international dinner an occasion to be remembered. Places for 250 persons were provided at tables seating approximately ten each. Every table represented a different country—America, Argentina, the Belgian Congo, Chile, China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, England, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Malaya, Mexico, Netherlands, Russia, Sweden. There were hostesses and assistant hostesses for each table, dressed in native costumes. To decorate their tables hostesses used art objects from the respective nations. Members of other churches were generous in lending costumes and decorative pieces. Ticket buyers were privileged to choose any table they wished.

The main course was the same at all tables, but dessert for each table was prepared and served by the hostess and was typical of the country for which the table was named. Sweden's dessert was snow pudding and Swedish pastry; China's was almond cakes; England's was the fancy pudding called "trifle"; the Belgian Congo table served a tropical fruit bowl.

Large flags of many nations, borrowed from the Girl Scouts, formed a background for the stage and each table displayed the flag of its respective country. Smaller flags of construction paper at each place setting made the tables colorful; these flags were also used as covers for the mimeographed programs.

Another plan is to turn Thanksgiving week end into an international week end! As your contribution to internationalism, why not invite foreign students in near-by colleges to be guests in the homes of your members for this most American holiday of the year?

Send your invitation to the deans of any of your state colleges, asking them to let you know a week in advance how many

foreign students would like to spend Thanksgiving with American families. Through your church bulletin or in an announcement at your women's group meeting, ask for volunteers who would like to entertain the foreign guests over the week end. Ask for other volunteers who, though they cannot take guests into their homes, have cars and would be available to drive the guests on a sightseeing tour.

In the case of both hostesses and guests it must be understood that they will be given priority according to the order in which they sign up. Some may have to be disappointed if the number of guests and hostesses doesn't match.

They will, of course, be honored guests at your Sunday worship service. And besides the warmth and hospitality of American homes at holiday time, with the typical American feast of turkey, cranberry sauce, sweet potatoes and pumpkin pie, you will want them to see a typical American community as it really is.

A guided tour of your community may include a visit to the public schools, playgrounds, the local public library and museum, brief inspection of the principal industries of the community and hospital facilities. If yours is a farm community, a visit to a model farm and a glimpse of modern American farm methods would be enlightening. Give them some idea of the community's historical background, and show them any historical landmarks.

Plan a fellowship supper at the church for one night of the foreign students' visit and invite the entire congregation to share in it. At a special open forum following the supper, ask your guests to describe their own countries and tell any special problems they may have. What a wonderful opportunity this will give for better understanding among all! Through such a week end, both foreign visitors and their hosts will find a deeper appreciation of each other's cultures.

Such a plan was carried out with complete success for two years by the small town of Osage, Iowa. Here they proved that every community has the facilities for promoting world understanding. Twelve foreign students from the University of Iowa accepted the invitation the first year with probable apprehension

on the parts of the hostesses and guests. But the visit proved so enjoyable to all that when the invitation was extended again, forty-one students responded.

In this Iowa town, people proved to themselves that races and religions can live together without barriers and prejudices, as long as they observe respect for each other's freedom of religion and thought. Your town can prove it, too.

If you prefer a less elaborate Thanksgiving observance, you might build one around the President's Thanksgiving proclamation. The original Thanksgiving was a simple gathering together in gratitude for the year's blessings. "They brought of the works of their hands an offering unto the Lord." Let each member who comes to your Thanksgiving observance bring a sample of the best of what he has produced during the year. Those who are farmers would naturally bring the finest fruits of their fields, but those who are not might bring some article manufactured in the industry in which they are employed, produce from a garden, or any symbol of professional or athletic achievement. The ladies could bring garments they have made themselves, quilts, needle-point, crochet work or tatting.

Autumn leaves, sumac berries, bittersweet, dry cornstalks will give you plenty of suitable decorative materials. Use a toy wheelbarrow for your centerpiece, overflowing with fall fruits and vegetables—gourds, Indian corn, apples, and so on. You might prepare a harvest corsage for each lady and a boutonniere for each man. These came into vogue in smart New York florist shops recently, and could be inexpensively made by any skillful fingers. Use any of the wild dry seeds, grasses and leaves or strawflowers, being sure to include something bright to set off the autumn shades of brown and tan. Acorns wired into place are effective. Make an artistic arrangement, fasten tightly together with wire, and tie with a yellow or orange ribbon.

A simple buffet would be refreshment enough if feasting in homes at this season makes you less eager to prepare a full supper. Serve cider in a punch bowl with orange slices floating on top. Tiny lighted candles stuck into the center of each orange slice

are pretty. Doughnuts and salted nuts could be served with this, or you may prefer dainty sandwiches, and pumpkin or mince pie. The real feast is the feast of thanksgiving in your hearts.

A suitable program would include the reading of the President's Thanksgiving proclamation, followed by an appropriate prayer of thanks by the pastor for the abundance, accomplishment and spiritual blessings which have enriched our lives during the past year. Allow ample time for guests to examine the articles which have been brought in Thanksgiving testimony. Arrangement for displaying them effectively on tables and against walls should be carefully planned.

The custom of decorating doorways for Thanksgiving as attractively as for Christmas, which is common in New England communities, seems charming. A more general observance of it would add significance to this holiday that is so uncommercial it often gets snowed under. In New England before Thanksgiving doorways are hung with artistic bunches of Indian corn and autumn leaves together, and some set fat yellow pumpkins on either side of their doorsteps. Harvest decorations make good bazaar items this time of year, including those for indoor use—gourds, sumac, red oak leaves and bittersweet (if it is not on your local conservation list).

Thanksgiving season is a good time to have your yearly Every Member Canvass, featured by a big dinner to bring all church members together and draw out those who have not been active. A turkey supper is a natural favorite; but, if most members are planning turkey for their home festivities, roast goose, duck or chicken might have more appeal.

An appropriate after-dinner program for such an occasion could consist of a few words on the meaning of Thanksgiving by your minister, followed by each person present telling briefly of a blessing for which he would like to express gratitude.

Afterward a simple pageant may be produced at one end of the room, or on a platform. The setting might include a simulated campfire in the center. From one side a Pilgrim man and woman walk slowly toward the fire, while from the other side

a pair of Indians advance. In pantomime the Indians offer the Pilgrims their pipe of peace, and the Pilgrims offer food. For background music the pianist may play "Faith of Our Fathers." A more elaborate pageant may be planned by using what appears to be a huge picture frame for your setting. When the curtains open, costumed figures appear in the frame to represent different famous paintings associated with Thanksgiving, such as "The First Thanksgiving in America" by J. L. G. Ferris, "Landing of the Pilgrims" by Rothermel, or "Pilgrims Going to Church."

To costume these pageants Indians may simply be wrapped in blankets with a feather in the band around their heads, or regular Indian suits may be made. For Pilgrim women use a full-skirted gray or blue dress with white neckerchief and apron and cap cut like a baby's bonnet. Pilgrim men wear long-waisted coats over knickers, knee buckles and white square collars.

## C H A P T E R 3 5



### *A "One-world" Christmas Carol Service*

Including everybody is a basic element of Christmas. Let's remember this in making our group Christmas plans. Let every member have a share in the activities. And you might consider having your Christmas services recorded to share with shut-ins and those unable to attend services, regardless of their religious or church affiliations.

If you have a regular candlelight carol service, or if you want to inaugurate one, why not give it a "one-world" theme? No other time is more appropriate than Christmas for promoting the principle of international unity based on the brotherhood-of-man concept. Different groups in your church may each be assigned the presentation of the music of some nation. Separate groups of the women's society, the men's group, married couples' group, and divisions of the Sunday school could each be responsible for one number.

Costumes may or may not be used, but the singers will have a more effective appearance if they are dressed alike. Each group may choose a costume of its own, if they prefer. Some may want to wear choir robes. Girls would look well in white dresses with red and green bows in their hair. Special red, green and white carol costumes make a colorful picture. And there is nothing more effective than a purple robe with a sprig of holly at the shoulder. To carry out your "one-world" theme, you might even wear costumes of the different countries.

Cover your carol books with red paper for added Christmas

atmosphere. Plump red candles flickering on the window sills and in sconces on the platform will add to the hushed reverence of such a service. Assign a specific individual to watch each group of candles, so that there will be no mishaps. It would be lovely for each person participating to be given a candle. As a group files onto the platform, each individual may light his or her candle at a large candle placed beside the stairway. Holding them directly under their faces as they sing casts soft lights and shadows, and as they leave the platform, each may blow out his candle again.

Instead of just singing the carols, why not prepare a little description of the country where each carol originated and how it came to be written? This could be read by one member of each group before they sing the carol, or a special reader, dressed in page's costume, holding a scroll-like script, could read all of them.

To represent American carols you may choose "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" or "We Three Kings." English carols may be "Joy to the World," "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen," "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing" or "What Child Is This?" For German carols you may choose "Away in a Manger" or "From Heaven High I Come to You." "Silent Night" is Bavarian, and "Good King Wenceslas" Bohemian. French songs are "O Come, All Ye Faithful," "O Holy Night" and "The First Nowell."

These songs, accompanied by historical sketches, may be found in the book, *Sing for Christmas* by Opal Wheeler, published in 1943 by E. P. Dutton & Co. If you want more carols of other lands, or more unusual ones, refer to the book *Sixty Carols of All Nations* by Eduardo Marzo, published in 1928 by the Willis Music Co., Cincinnati, Ohio. This book may be more difficult to secure, but your librarian or music dealer may be able to help you. Another book that will give you good descriptive material about origins and countries from which carols came, as well as the carols themselves, is *Christmas Carols* by Hendrik Willem Van Loon and Grace Castagnetta, published in 1937.

by Simon & Schuster, Inc. *Fireside Book of Folk Songs* published in 1947 by Simon & Schuster, Inc., has an excellent chapter on the origin of carol singing and its use in different countries, and each carol published includes a little explanatory paragraph, from which your script can be worked out.

Singing carols from house to house or in institutions also



Give your carol singers the old-fashioned look by supplying them with these easily made black pasteboard lanterns.

shares a great deal of the gladness of Christmas. For such an occasion your group might carry flashlights, not only to make a cheerful effect in the night, but to illuminate words and music, if necessary. Another idea is to make lanterns of black pasteboard with openings cut out for the light of a flashlight to shine through. These give the effect of the original carol singers.

## C H A P T E R 3 6



### *How You Can Share Christmas with Others*

Christmas is a holy time—a time of giving, a time of forgetting oneself in remembering others, a time, truly, for Christian service. What can you as a group give this Christmas? And to whom can you give?

Giving to the poor has been largely taken over by social agencies. But even if there are no longer baskets of food to be prepared for the poor, we can go a step beyond and provide for the spiritual need of those about us. Search carefully and you will seek out many lonely hearts to whom you may extend the love and cheer that make Christmas what it is.

One of the most overlooked persons at Christmas time, though she will tell you she doesn't mind, is the busy mother who, besides having gifts to think of for her brood, probably is preparing a large dinner for relatives. Often she is so busy that what she had looked forward to as fun becomes an added burden. So benefit both mother and children by giving her a little extra freedom. Offer to oversee children at the church recreation rooms, either for the whole day, or the Saturday morning before Christmas.

Babies and toddlers should be tended separately from older children. If you have a church nursery, the cribs and playpens used there will come in handy. Play records for tiny tots, read them stories, take them for a walk. Some simple Christmas program may be planned, if you like, with games and a grab-bag. For the older children supply puzzles to work, pictures and

crayons to color with, scissors, paste, magazines to cut from. For constructive activity you might have them make Christmas scrapbooks for the hospitals or decorations for trees. Provide plenty of things for them to do, and don't expect them to stick to one thing too long.

A Nebraska church has what it calls the Family Christmas Dinner on Christmas Day. This is for members of the church who would otherwise spend a lonely Christmas, and it's worked out by them. (Those with big family dinners at home are not included.) A widow whose children live far away superintends the cooking and prepares the enormous turkey. A middle-aged woman and her maiden daughter, who have no other relatives, set the tables with attractive Christmas decorations. Several single women employed in business enjoy helping with the vegetables. Everybody helps to serve informally, just as if the dinner were at home. Each contributes what he can and extra expense is absorbed by the women's society. A notice in the church bulletin invites anyone who is a stranger or alone in the community to come to this Christmas dinner. There may be a family new to the city, a man away from his family on business, off-duty nurses from a near-by hospital.

Make a concerted effort to discover all the people in your congregation who will be alone over Christmas. Your minister can help. Then if you aren't planning a large-scale church dinner, ask for volunteers who would like to entertain such people at dinner in their homes. Your group could act as clearing house for invitations. This is especially helpful if members of the armed forces are stationed in your community or if there is a college nearby. There are always some students who cannot go home, and for whom the cheer of home life means much on Christmas Day.

The women of a Michigan church have created a custom which brings color and interest to an old people's home in their community. They call it the Hanging of the Greens. On the first Monday in December they come to the home, laden with wreaths, garlands, and table centerpieces, which they have made

themselves at a recent meeting from evergreens furnished by members. Members of the home, dressed in their best, gather in the parlor, and the president of the women's society reads to them the Christmas story. The vice-president explains the meaning of the Hanging of the Greens, and the pastor offers a prayer. Then the whole group moves from room to room, as various honored members of the society hang the greens in appropriate places. Then they lead the way back to the parlor, where all join in singing Christmas carols, and cookies and punch are served by the home.

In your community you can always arrange a cavalcade of cars and drive groups of the old people around the city to see the Christmas lights and decorations in homes and stores.

Christmas is for shut-ins, too. In countless ways you can lighten the load for them and bring the radiance of Christmas into their lives. Your gift to the shut-in may be a present, a specially planned visit, or a service. Give careful thought to finding the *right* gift.

A "friendship quilt" made by the members of your group is ideal for one confined to bed or wheelchair. Assign one large block to each member. On this let her embroider in color her name and a little drawing characteristic of herself. A musician might make a few musical notes, a good cook, a frying pan, one who gardens, some flowers. At a group meeting everyone can help sew the quilt pieces together.

Other suitable gifts are hand-knit bed socks, a pretty shawl or bed jacket, a potted plant, a spray of holly, bulbs to watch grow, soap, powder, stationery, handkerchiefs, a dresser scarf, a calendar, books, jelly or cookies.

Don't forget the unselfish ones who day after day are caring for these shut-ins. Christmas is for them, too. Remember them with a pretty apron you have made, a handkerchief with hand-crocheted edging to wear in a uniform pocket, a pair of mittens if she must push a wheelchair, homemade candy or a magazine subscription.

If you intend to visit shut-ins, plan your calls in collaboration with those who are responsible for their care, so that you don't

interfere with routine, and are sure of the best time and of how long to stay. Then your coming may enable the attendant to take a little time off for errands or necessary shopping. Don't go in the spirit of doing a duty, or that impression is sure to get across to the invalid.

This doesn't mean you have to give heed to complaining. If you are visiting this kind of patient, come prepared to read—perhaps a Christmas story, some well-chosen Bible passages, or appropriate poetry. You might bring a present of a memory book, in which each member of your group has written a bit of poetry or her motto and aim in life above her signature. Reading these through may help lift the dissatisfied shut-in out of the rut of self-pity.

A bedridden household always needs someone to do marketing, mail packages or letters. Perhaps you could take home some mending to do, special laundering, or do errands requiring a car. You might announce on a card that as your Christmas present you are giving the shut-in one of these services for a certain period of time. Well before Christmas you could assist with addressing and stamping Christmas cards for the incapacitated person. Or help do Christmas shopping right at home by bringing catalogs published by various stores, and magazines that include shopping columns, from which the shut-in can make selections. Set up a table, write out orders, and prepare necessary checks or money orders. Later you may gift-wrap the presents.

So seek out the needy ones of your community—those not necessarily wanting in material things, but needing your comfort and cheer. And take them an armful of the love that Christmas means.

## C H A P T E R 37



### "More Blessed to Give . . ."

Remembering the less fortunate is a vital part of your holiday activity. Here are twenty suggestions for your list of charitable giving. Most of them are things for you to make—either in your women's groups or individually. Work your thoughts and heart into them and be doubly blessed in giving a part of yourself with your gift:

1. *Balsam balls.* Fresh fragrance of the wintry woods to keep a shut-in from feeling left out of the festivities. Just buy solid red or green handkerchiefs, strip needles from balsam boughs and fill handkerchiefs, fastening the corners securely together with an elastic band to form ball. Tie with a pretty ribbon. They may be hung on a bedpost or tucked away under a pillow, and when the balsam is gone the hanky remains for use.

2. *Tray wreaths.* Shape fine wire, such as that which comes on some milk bottle tops, into a circle approximately two inches in diameter, by bending around a jelly jar. Tape small pieces of evergreen and wire (or tie them with black thread) onto this circular wire. Decorate the tiny wreaths with small hemlock cones, bright red alderberries or barberries and a red ribbon bow. Wreaths may be laid on breakfast trays in hospitals and old people's homes. See *Make Your Own Merry Christmas* by Anne Wertsner, M. Barrows & Co., Inc., 1946.

3. *Crocheted flower pot covers.* Crochet pretty covers to decorate the plants you present to shut-ins. These tie on, and may

be removed for washing. Or crochet a heartshaped sachet bag for fragrance under an invalid's pillow.

4. *Painted play areas.* Cut the legs of a discarded dining table down to child-height and paint on the top a design of roads, rivers, fields, parking areas to give children a delightful terrain for building block villages and scooting toy cars, planes and boats. A similar area can be painted on a piece of linoleum. Cut away ragged edges of a used piece, or paint over an inexpensive new one. A fine gift for an orphanage or nursery school.

5. *Bird feeding station.* Such a gift installed outside a bedroom window gives a male shut-in a closeup of the birds' winter activities.

6. *Christmas corsages.* Make these of small clusters of almost any greens with a bit of dried salvia, barberries or cones tucked in artistically and the whole tied with a pretty ribbon. Make enough for everyone in an old ladies' home, nurses included. See *The Complete Book of Flower Arrangement* by Rockwell & Grayson, Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1947, for hints on making corsages.

7. *Crocheted orchid.* For a nurse who is confined long hours in the care of an invalid. (She deserves a real one!) Put in a pretty box, and tuck into the petals a pair of movie tickets for her well-earned afternoon off.

8. *Pillow covers.* A ruffled pillowcase of flowered percale will lift spirits of shut-ins. Or buy pastel pillow cases and decorate with your own handmade edging. Edge a handkerchief to match.

9. *Multiple candle holder.* In a piece of white birch or a straight block of wood drill one-inch holes at regular intervals to hold four or five candles, and paint a bright color. Arrange green branches around the base and tuck in Christmas tree ornaments. Any institution will appreciate this attractive centerpiece or mantel decoration.

10. *Gay place mats.* On your sewing machine whip up tray sets from inexpensive cotton fabrics. You can invent all sorts of interesting trimming patterns with borders of flowered braid, looped braid and rickrack. Make napkin to match, and add a

pocket in the mat which will hold silver and keep it from sliding while tray is being carried.

11. *Edible tray wreath.* Melt one-half pound fresh marshmallows and one-quarter cup butter (or margarine) in top of double boiler over hot water. Cook, stirring constantly, until mixture is of the consistency of a heavy molasses syrup. Pour marshmallow mixture over one package crisp rice cereal in a large heavily greased bowl. Stir with large spoon or your own well-scrubbed and buttered hands until all the cereal is coated. Pack marshmallow-cereal mixture into greased individual ring molds with your hands. The tighter you pack, the better the wreath. Chill molds for about ten minutes. Loosen edge of cereal ring with a spatula. Gently force ring out of mold. Attach a bright ribbon bow and dot with cinnamon candies. Then let wreaths stand overnight to harden. Makes fifteen wreaths, but you can use fewer molds and make them up as you need them.

12. *Preserves from your storeroom.* Collect enough to provide a jar for everyone in your local veteran's hospital or mission home. Wrap each with a lace paper doily tied over the top with silvery Christmas ribbon or tinsel. Tuck into the bow a pencil with a crossword puzzle rolled around it, a package of chewing gum, fragrant greens, or a candy cane.

13. *The perennial apron.* A thoughtful remembrance for women from foreign shores living in your community, who feel far from home and loved customs especially at this season. From one housewife to another it speaks the universal language of home. Make up the style you prefer to wear yourself in a couldn't-be-prettier fabric, and it will make her think of American friendliness every time she ties it round her waist.

14. *Flat evergreen trees.* Make these any size, to hang in a window, at the foot of a bed or on a door, or to lay on a tray. Use the cardboard your laundry sends with men's shirts to cut out a pyramid shape with a small trunk and a tub-shaped base. Sew pieces of evergreen to this card, starting at the bottom with the larger branches and working one side and then the other. Save a nice pointed piece for the top. Then fill in the center of

the tree with more evergreen. The trunk will be sufficiently covered by the greens. But cover the tub with red or green ribbon or oil cloth, adding an extra strip or folding it over at the top to give a rimlike appearance. Fasten this securely at the back with cellophane tape. Cover the stitches on the back with another piece of cardboard cut the same shape. You don't have to trim this tree, but provide a loop for hanging.

15. *Doll house and furniture.* Hours of pleasure for the little girls of some orphanage. Make a doll house of two orange crates set on top of each other, or, if you prefer, follow a pattern.

16. *Scrapbooks.* Foreign students in a near-by college will not feel so "foreign" when they receive a simple gift with a true American flavor. Give them scrapbooks for collecting mementoes and clippings from their visit in our land.

17. *Dainty headbands.* Teen-age girls adore a bright bit of decoration to fasten in their hair. For those in an orphanage make attractive headbands of plastic icicle clips from the ten-cent store. Cover with wide, flat, velvet ribbon, with loops and ends hanging down to cover both sides, or with velvet tubing, also available in the dime stores. Add a colorful bunch of artificial flowers for a gay touch, or provide a selection to use alternately.

18. *Knitting.* Make various simple things that a mission house might distribute. Knitted washcloths could be wrapped together with a bar of soap and a sprig of evergreen with a red ribbon. Plain scarves in stockinette stitch in sizes for children or adults are warm gifts. Stocking caps, mittens, or socks are more elaborate but most acceptable.

19. *Small crocheted rug.* In fresh colors and bright new design this is a comforting thing to have beside an invalid's bed or in front of the chair in which he or she will sit.

20. *Box crèche.* Turn a box (convenient size for a mantel) on its side. From the bottom of box (now the back) cut out star shapes with razor blade, then line the box with light blue crepe paper pasted in place. Slash strips of green crepe and wrap around short wires to form Christmas trees for each corner of the box. Dress clothespins in crepe paper to make nativity figures

—flowing white gowns for both Mary and Joseph, with a head-piece for Mary and gold notorial seals for the halos. The crib is easily fashioned from a box top covered with looped bands of crepe paper. Place box in front of electric light bulb, and your crèche will be attractively illuminated through the cutout stars.

### GIFTS OF SERVICE

This Christmas let's really give from the heart instead of from the pocketbook! Gifts of actual service will mean more and cost less than gifts we go out and buy, and they make Christmas extend throughout the year. Let each member of your group draw a name. On the appointed day each brings a gift certificate for her own services made out on a Christmas card.

Your gift will be a real indication of your concern for others. Think what you can do that will most help the one whose name you have drawn. You may have a garden full of flowers in summer and be a whiz at arranging them. Then write your gift certificate: "Good for a floral centerpiece for any party between May and October." If you drive a car and draw the name of one who finds it difficult to go about, your certificate may read: "Good for transportation to church during the winter months." A young mother would appreciate a gift of an evening of babysitting. A mother of older children might prefer a gift of mending. Tending a pet left home while on a vacation trip, polishing silver, pressing, typing a report on paper, are good ideas. And of course there's always baking. With a gift certificate, a favorite dessert might be redeemed at a time when it won't add to the overabundance of Christmas feasting.

## C H A P T E R 3 8



### *"Birthday of the King"*

A Christmas Program by Jane Kirk

You will need three adult readers and the services of your organist, choir, and ten children to put on this program.

The only property or setting needed is a large birthday cake, which should have the center of interest on your platform. You may make a simulated one of styrofoam, which you may be able to buy at your ten-cent store, or make one of a circular box. Cover with a genuine icing for a realistic appearance. Arrange holes so that ten candles can easily be inserted into it by children. (Use a real cake, if you prefer.)

Children participating should be asked to dress similarly, wearing white blouses and dark skirts or white shirts and dark trousers. Add a simple touch for Christmas, such as red bow ties or sprigs of holly. Have a boy and a girl of each age—six, eight, ten, twelve and fourteen, so they will be graduated in height.

Provide a large lighted candle at the back of the cake from which each child may light the small taper which he is to insert into the cake. If you think it wiser, you might let each child stick in the candle, and when it is finished, the first reader may light them all at once before the singing of "Happy Birthday." Care must be taken to protect against fire hazards whenever candles are used in a performance. It is a good idea to get instructions from your local fire department.

The program opens with the children's choir marching down

the aisle singing, "The Birthday of the King." If you have no such choir, lead the whole congregation in singing it.

First Reader: "But thou, Bethlehem, Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel. . . ." Micah 5:2.

Second Reader: The Christmas story from Matthew 2:1-11.

Choir follows softly with "Silent Night, Holy Night." Audience may join in.

Third Reader: "The Little King" by Irene Gass.

The camel bells are sounding  
Upon the still night air,  
As Mary lulls the Christ-child,  
Her little son so fair.

"Dream," she sings, "O Jesus,  
Of gifts that monarchs bring—  
To greet Thee in Thy manger,  
A little Baby King.

"Who would not be happy,  
Wrapped about with love,  
Worshipped by the angels,  
Who watch from Heav'n above?"

Thus sang gentle Mary,  
Op'ning wide the door—  
"Enter, gracious Magi,  
And tread the sacred floor;

Then tell the world the tidings  
Of this Babe so sweet,  
So that all may gather  
At His rosy feet."

Choir stands at front of platform and sings, "The Cherry Tree Carol," specially learned for this occasion, or "Away in a Manger."

First Reader:

Now every Child that dwells on earth,  
Stand up, stand up and sing:  
The passing night has given birth

Unto the children's King.  
Sing sweet as the flute,  
Sing clear as the horn,  
Sing joy of the Children,  
Come Christmas morn;

Little Christ Jesus  
Our brother is born.

—First verse of "Our Brother Is Born"  
by Eleanor Farjeon

What is *your* birthday gift to Christ the King? While the children answer this question for us, will everyone present look within his heart and seek to discover what quality he most needs to make him more fit to be Christ's representative? Whatever quality of character will make you a better associate of your fellow men, is your offering, your best gift, to the Christ child this Christmas. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

One by one the children step upon the platform and speak their lines or read them from a slip of paper. Each lights a candle as he finishes his lines and sets it in the birthday cake, until the cake is aglow.

First Child: My gift is love. I will seek to love not only my family and friends, but everyone I see.

Second Child: My gift is patience. I will learn to wait quietly for God's will to be done.

Third Child: My gift is sincerity. I will try to say only what I truly mean; not what I think others want me to say.

Fourth Child: My gift is joy. I will seek to express it in all I do. I will try to make little of trouble.

Fifth Child: My gift is gratitude. I will seek to be more thankful for all the good I see about me.

Sixth Child: My gift is gentleness. I will walk softly and talk softly, so that I will find the ones who need a helping hand.

Seventh Child: My gift is purity. I will seek to keep my thinking free of any thoughts that are hateful, unjust, unkind, untrue.

Eighth Child: My gift is diligence. I will try to be more prompt and efficient and not waste time in idleness.

Ninth Child: My gift is meekness. I will try to replace pride, criticism, and disregard for others with modesty, praise, and thoughtfulness.

Tenth Child: My gift is temperance. I will try to be moderate in all I do—in speech, in habits, in action and in appearance.

Here are two more to use or to interchange with any of the above:

1. My gift is perseverance. I will seek not to be discouraged or give up in carrying out a purpose for the good of all.

2. My gift is spirituality. I will try to think more of laying up treasures in heaven than upon earth.

When the last candle is lighted, all children circle round the cake and sing, "Happy birthday to you, Happy birthday, dear Jesus, happy birthday to you." Organist plays Christmas carols as congregation leaves.

## C H A P T E R 39



### *Outdoor Christmas Pageant*

At dusk on Christmas Eve each year three thousand spectators crowd the streets of Bronxville, New York, to watch the Christmas story enacted on the grounds of the Reformed Church. In the cast are members of all denominations. Tower chimes play Christmas hymns, and an unseen choir accompanies the pageant of the nativity. The audience joins in the singing, and the village swells with music.

So appealing is this presentation that it needs no publicity. Bronxville gets more spectators than it can handle. Your group could found such a tradition for your own community. If your building has grounds that may be adapted as a stage, you could spark the organization of a program similar to that of Bronxville. Or, on a smaller scale, you might give your usual Christmas pageant outdoors and invite the community to come and join with you in carol singing.

The Bronxville program began back in 1913 when villagers simply gathered for carols in front of the hospital on Christmas Eve and then lighted the community tree. The program developed in detail, and the tradition now is similar to that of a passion play.

The grounds of the Reformed Church slope gently toward the space for the community gathering. There is an unobtrusive background of trees, and from fifty to sixty fir trees are set up for the occasion. The stable, a simple lean-to about eight by six feet, is constructed of four posts covered with a rough board roof.

The manger is made of wooden strips and filled with straw, and is lighted by a 40-watt bulb, shielded from the spectators. This is the focal point of the tableau. Tall poles are set up with flood-lights, and other spotlights are on high poles.

The cast is made up of representatives of all major community organizations. Joseph is played by the man heading the community chest campaign for the year. The girl who portrays Mary is chosen from the senior class of the high school by vote of the faculty. She is selected for sweetness of disposition, generosity of spirit and integrity.

The little angel in the manger is chosen by faculty vote from the elementary school. For the roles of the three Wise Men, one man is appointed by each of the three churches having the largest membership. If your community has more than three churches, you might rotate the selection.

Approximately twelve shepherds are chosen by the head of the local American Legion from its membership, with two additional boy shepherds—Scouts selected by the Boy Scout Commissioner. For the twelve angels Girl Scouts are chosen by Sunday-school superintendents of all churches. Care must be taken in choosing the boy shepherds and angels. These groups may make or mar rehearsals.

Costumes are simple and flowing, the colors are muted and carefully chosen for blending. Angels' wings are made of buckram. The costumes of the Wise Men and the shepherds are made by the women's societies, which also handle repairs. The League for Service costumes the angels. All costumes are the property of the community. Joseph's is an authentic garment brought from the Holy Land. The cast dresses warmly, with costumes worn over outdoor clothes.

Volunteers from all church choirs in the community form the chorus of more than twenty-five voices, headed by a single director. Hymn or carol arrangements without solo parts are best since a single voice is less effective outdoors and emphasis should be placed on group rather than individual performance.

A leader for the community singing is also chosen. To more

easily direct an outdoor audience he holds a flashlight. Words of the carols are flashed on a screen, and schools and Sunday-schools are asked in advance to have children learn two or three verses of them. Accompaniment is furnished by the high-school orchestra.

Traffic is re-routed and street lights are put out. After fifteen minutes of Christmas music played on the church chimes the pageant opens with the whole community singing "Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful." A rector or minister of one of the churches gives a short prayer and reads Luke 2:8-14.

Community singing of "Silent Night" follows. During this carol the spotlights are turned on to reveal angels, arranged in groups of from two to four standing apart and framing the pageant. Throughout this carol the floodlights are turned on and the other angels appear around the manger. Lighting is handled by a voluntary crew headed by the director, and it is the lighting that cues the entire pageant.

Joseph and Mary enter, Mary riding on a donkey and preceded by the manger angel. Mary, tenderly assisted by Joseph, alights from the donkey, walks slowly to the manger, and leaning over, appears to place her child in the manger. She turns on the concealed electric light as she does this. The manger angel kneels prayerfully opposite Mary and the Babe.

At this moment the invisible choir breaks forth with its Gloria. Dimitri Bornianski's "Gloria," without any instrumental accompaniment, is good. The choir is concealed in a place where the voices will carry perfectly, but seem neither too close nor too loud. The angels raise their trumpets high and hold them to their lips. Trumpets are false, made of wood and gilt paint. During this music, shepherds approach the manger from the side in groups, as though coming from their fields. A young one comes first, beckons to others, and all move forward slowly, hesitatingly, though the tempo of the music must not drag. Then the three Wise Men, each with his gift, come into sight, spaced well apart. Meanwhile shepherds kneel in well-formed groups. The Wise Men pay their obeisance, leave their gifts and move back slightly

to make the complete tableau. This tableau is held long enough for young children to absorb it, and always until the Gloria is finished.

Then a minister blesses the community Christmas tree, which is now lighted. "Oh, Little Town of Bethlehem" follows, sung by the entire group. Another minister steps forward and pronounces the benediction. Community singing of "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing" begins, and as lights are gradually dimmed, shepherds and Wise Men begin to move off in groups or singly until the stage is cleared except for the lighted manger, with the angel kneeling beside it, and Mary and Joseph.

Following the outline of this simple but very effective pageant, your group could easily prepare a similar one. The whole production takes twenty minutes. Only one or two rehearsals are needed for the cast to learn positions and movements. In Bronxville the Mayor appoints the director for the pageant and someone to take charge of raising the necessary funds. A request for contributions is sent out on an attractive Christmas letterhead to the entire population of the village. As the costumes may be used year after year with few replacements, there is little expense except for lighting.

## C H A P T E R 4 0



### *Things to Make Out of Greeting Cards*

What about those beautiful and elaborate greeting cards you receive during the year and especially at Christmas? Must they be regrettfully destroyed or tucked away and forgotten? With these ideas as starters you may find uses for such cards in your group's activities.

If you're planning a specific theme for your group luncheon, turn greeting cards into placecards. If yours is a "white Christmas" motif, choose a snow scene for each place. Just write individual names on them, and for an extra touch frame pictures with a tiny lace paper doily edging. Comparison of pictures will spur conversation. If you are planning a fir tree, candlestick, or poinsettia theme, choose cards accordingly.

Cutouts from cards make easy art work for your holiday bulletin boards or any posters for Christmas activities. Or use strips or triangles of the cards pasted side by side, patchwork-quilt fashion, for a pretty border around a bulletin board or poster.

When planning little gifts for the children from the Christmas tree, make cornucopias out of the larger Christmas cards and fill with a few candies and nuts. Just roll up the card from one corner, lap the two opposite corners over well, and fasten with a paper stapler. Make a yarn handle.

Do your milk bottles have caps which just fit over the top edge? These are usually brightly colored with a rippled edge. For pretty Christmas tree decorations, take out the center circle with the name of the dealer on it, cut out a picture of the same

size, paste into the center of the cap, and attach a cord to the top. You can also trim a tree effectively with whole Christmas cards attached to the branches with cellophane tape.

Have everyone bring to a group meeting her favorite poem or hymn verse, carefully written on a heavy sheet of paper. At the meeting she may choose illustrations from the cards to attach to her poem. Exchange these with one another, or keep them on hand to send to a member.

Use card cutouts for illustrations on bookmarks made of construction paper (2" x 8½") and given with each Bible presented to young people or other members of the church.

Have on hand greeting cards from which to choose suitable pictures for decorating program covers or menus for banquets and suppers. If you are giving a party for teen-agers glue card cutouts to glasses used to serve lemonade or chocolate drinks. Use whole cards folded in half to make score pads for contests.

Boxes of cookies for a shut-in can be made prettier with greeting-card decorations. Scrapbooks, of course, are always a good way of using the pictures. For children's wards in the hospitals you might use cardboards such as those that come from the laundry in men's shirts. Fold these in half and paste pictures on front and back. Children can hold these or stand them on their beds when books are too heavy.

Sunday-school workers may find hundreds of uses for greeting cards. Coat hooks for tiny tots may be marked with different figures pasted above them, helping little ones who cannot read to remember their own places. Blotters and calendars made to take home as gifts may be decorated with pictures the children choose.

Peep shows illustrating the Christmas story may be made with greeting card cutouts. Use a shoe box with three openings cut in the lid to let in light and a peephole at one of the narrow ends of the box. Against the opposite narrow end, inside the box, paste a background scene, then cut out the figures, leaving a margin under the feet of each, which may be folded back and pasted to the box in such a way that the figures stand upright. Arrange

your scene so that all figures may be seen from the peephole opening. Paste bits of colored cellophane or tissue paper over the openings in the top of the box. By leaving only one open at a time, you will get different lighting effects.

Triptychs can also be beautifully made with some of these pictures. Use a carton, cutting the sides for the desired design, and cover in plain crepe paper of a color to suit the season. Paste pictures on this background.

To prepare and store your cards for use, ask those who contribute to cut off the name portions of the cards before turning them in, or have your group do this. Sort and catalog all pictures. Store pictures of similar kind in separate boxes plainly labeled. They will be ready when you want them, and you will find them useful.

To make greeting card baskets all you need are some sheets of clear acetate, a hole puncher, yarn and a crochet hook.

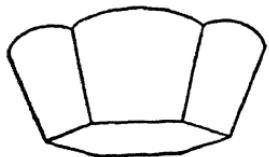
One church member made forty-five of these charming baskets during one year to give to her five children's school teachers, scout leaders, school friends, and choir director, as well as her own neighbors, Sunday-school class members and various invalids and shut-ins. Some she filled with cookies or candy as an added attraction.

Making greeting-card baskets would be good handwork for your group some snowy December afternoon. Seat everyone around a long table and apportion each a task that she finds agreeable. Some may cut out the cards and others the acetate according to the pattern. Some may punch the holes; others crochet around the edges, and still others may assemble the baskets.

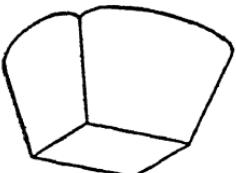
Include some for your list of shut-ins and elderly members who no longer attend meetings, for the hospital for its Christmas morning cheer. Make enough so that you may each take one home. Have some on hand to take when you go calling on new members. Make them as crayon holders for the primary classes. You may want to fill them with popcorn, nuts, candy, cookies, even bath salts, crayons, or a jigsaw puzzle. Hold contents in



**Bottom of hexagonal basket  
is two hexagons 2" on each  
side; for square type, two  
2" square - shaped pieces.**



**Here are actual size  
patterns for making  
(left) the hexagonal  
or (below) the square  
basket. Shapes shown  
are for side panels.**



place with wax paper or cellophane and tie with a red ribbon. You might make small square baskets as place favors or nut cups, or put handles on them and hang them on a Christmas tree.

Here's how to go about it: First choose your pattern. The hexagonal style makes a roomier basket, but the square is also pretty. Shown here are actual size patterns for each type. If you prefer a larger or smaller basket and decide to make your own pattern, be sure to keep these basic proportions, with the top of the panel slightly larger than the base.

For making the hexagonal basket cut two bottom pieces and twelve side pieces of clear acetate. For the side pieces use the pattern we give you. For the bottom pieces cut two hexagons two inches on each side. Cut the same number of pictures (fourteen) from Christmas cards. Place two picture pieces the same shape back to back and place a protective covering of acetate over each, like glass over a picture. Punch holes a quarter-inch apart, one-fourth inch from the edge around each panel, now consisting of two layers of acetate and two of card pictures. The originator of this basket found punching the holes in a straight line the hardest part of the work. Her husband helped out by using his hand drill, cutting through about eight layers at a time.

Next crochet around each side and bottom panel separately, leaving about eight to ten inches of thread at the end. You may use various colors of heavy crochet thread, or even light weight plain cord will do as well. Using the long threads left at the end of the crochet work, sew the parts of the basket together so that this thread is unnoticeable from the outside.

To make the square basket, use the alternate pattern for the side panel, and a two-inch square piece for the bottom, then follow directions for the hexagonal style.

You will want to assemble your baskets thoughtfully, choosing designs to suit those for whom the baskets are intended—flower pictures for flower lovers; horses, dogs, outdoor scenes for men; pets, birds and children for little folks. You might like to include at least one religious scene in each basket, and as many as four

in some. Be careful not to put a Santa Claus or humorous picture next to a religious scene.

Number .010 clear cellulose acetate is used to make these card baskets substantial and usable. It is available by the sheet, 20" x 50" or 25" x 40" at \$1.10 per sheet, from the Transilwrap Co., 2814 West Fullerton Avenue, Chicago 47, Illinois. Postage is extra, amounting to 27 cents for one sheet or 53 cents for four sheets.

Those to whom you give your baskets will find many uses for them. They may hold jewelry or hairpins and nets on a dressing table; pencils, erasers and paper clips on a desk; sewing notions at the sewing machine; cosmetics at a bedside table; marbles in a boy's room.

P A R T   I V



*Gardening and the Church*



## C H A P T E R   4 1



### *Plant a Garden Unto the Lord*

When it is time to turn up the earth for another season of growing, it is also good to give consideration to the flowers you will need for your church activities. Do you have a well-organized garden committee, or is the providing of flowers for your chancel, for ushers to wear, and for group luncheons and meetings a hit-or-miss affair? Is it left entirely to one or two conscientious individuals to tend to every week year after year? Many should share this work.

You have, no doubt, heard of the "Lord's Acre" plan. It was a tithing system for farm people whereby each farmer was asked to set aside one acre of his land to be known as "the Lord's acre." The proceeds of everything grown on this acre would constitute his offering to the church. On a smaller scale, each of us, as we plant our gardens this year, might consider putting aside a certain portion of our space specifically to raise flowers for church activities, and for paying calls on shut-ins or newcomers to the vicinity.

An efficient garden or floral committee has an important place in any church. Why not examine your setup and see what can be done to plan this vital activity better? If you do not already have a garden committee, now is a good time to organize one. Let the individual most responsible for contributing flowers during past years be honorary head of this group, with the understanding that she is to use her knowledge to direct the floral activities, but to delegate the work to others and encourage as many individuals to take an active part in this task as possible.

The committee should be made up of gardening enthusiasts, who should all agree to have sections of their gardens devoted to growing the flowers needed for church uses. Keep a record of other church members from whom flowers may be available.

Another possibility is to grow flowers for your church right on the church grounds. If you are waiting to build a new edifice, you may have a large plot of land not being used. How much more suitable to develop this as a flower garden than to let it stand idle and unattractive! Some rural churches may be permanently blessed with enough space for such gardens. You might even consider putting up a greenhouse on your church property from which flowers might be supplied for church activities all year 'round. In this case your garden committee should be in charge of planting and tending the garden and greenhouse.

Take a good look at your church grounds, and see if they resemble "a desert place" for lack of proper shrubbery and growing things. There is no time like the present to make them "bud and blossom as the rose." Appoint members of your committee to work out the beautifying and landscaping of the grounds with or without professional help, as you prefer. You may find that one or two carefully tended flower beds will add immeasurably to the warmth of your church's welcome. Gay petunias are easily grown and colorful for this purpose. Beds of zinnias or pompon dahlias bordered with ageratum or sweet alyssum are good, too.

At your garden committee meeting, early in the year, organize the planting so that you will have good variety for all seasons. Decide which flowers each individual can grow best, or would prefer to grow. Talking the thing over will avoid duplication. Your members might even like to specialize in varieties suitable for different purposes. At any rate, try to arrange the plantings so that there will be only a few months of the year when you need to be supplied by a florist.

Make definite arrangements with your members as to which Sunday each one is to supply flowers for the chancel. Many persons hesitate to contribute flowers for fear someone else is

planning to do so the same day. Some Sundays you may have too many flowers, and other times no flowers may come in at all, unless you make assignments. Be sure that you have a wide selection of large showy flowers suitable for the chancel, as well as smaller, dainty types for your courtesy committee to take when they go visiting. Make arrangements so that this committee may easily secure bouquets whenever they have calls to make. In fact, you might inform all groups in the church that they may contact your committee whenever they need flowers for any purpose.

For early spring cuttings for the church you should have an ample supply of tulips, daffodils, and the flowering shrubs and trees, such as forsythia, dogwood, flowering quince, lilac, spirea, syringa. Then come iris and peonies, and during the summer you will want plenty of gladioli, lilies, roses, delphinium and phlox. Two new flowers that make handsome displays are giant double African marigolds and the ruffy, fluffy new zinnias, which resemble asters. Baby's breath, larkspur, and lace flowers should be grown for filling in arrangements. For fall be sure to have plenty of different colored dahlias and chrysanthemums, in all their exotic hues, that last so late into the cold weather.

To brighten dull hours for shut-ins or extend a cordial welcome to newcomers, you will want cutting beds of many smaller varieties, the brighter the better. If some member of your committee is successful with sweet peas, you have found a treasure, for there is nothing lovelier than a bowl of these butterfly-like blossoms. Snapdragons are another favorite for small bouquets; try some of the new giant-ruffled or all-double types. Zinnias, of course, are a must in their riot of bold colors, shapes, and sizes. And dusty-colored asters are ideal for late summer months. Calendulas mix well with many flowers, and last until the heaviest frost. Try velvety salpiglossis for an interesting change from the ordinary. And don't forget nasturtiums, cosmos, scabiosa, pyrethrum and aquilegia.

For calling on a new mother, a bouquet of tiny flowers is charming. Forget-me-nots are excellent to mix with any of the smaller varieties. A bouquet—all blue and white for the mother

of a boy or pink and white for a girl—would show thoughtful attention.

To supply boutonnieres for your ushers you may want to assign one or more members of your committee. For this purpose they should plant the tinier blossoming flowers. Of course, you will want a good supply of the old standby—cornflowers, or bachelor's buttons. If you prefer to use these every Sunday, you should have enough colors to give good variety—pink one week, blue another, white, and then red. A combination of red, white and blue is smart, too. Tiny "cupid" or pompon zinnias are good, dwarf marigolds and pansies. And of course, pinks are excellent, as well as the garden variety of carnations, which are as fragrant and fluffy as those the florists sell.

Now here's a little project for some ambitious members of your garden group: Let one or two devote their church gardens to the growing of everlasting flowers that can be dried in fall and made into winter bouquets to carry on your calls. A bouquet of these dry winter flowers is colorful and unusual. Made up of many different flowers, it provides something fascinating to look at for one who is confined to bed. For such bouquets choose the clover-like "globe amaranth" and "honesty," the silvery transparent, flat seed-pods that look so attractive either with everlastings or winter greens. The major part of your bouquets will be made up of the actual strawflowers or helichrysum that dries in all the vividness of its metallic reds, silky yellows and glistening whites. You will also want the daisylike acroclinium and the soft blue and lavender statice for color variation.

And while we're talking about flowers, you might keep in mind that packets of seeds are a novel idea for prizes, "auction" donations, or gifts in spring. Collections of easily grown flower seeds, together with a garden trowel, make a "different" present for a youngster, too.

## C H A P T E R 4 2



### *New Ideas for the Flower Committee*

One summer Sunday when I was visiting in Iowa I found my hostess at 10 A.M. in the garden dressed for church and cutting some lovely peonies.

"Thought I'd better take a few flowers over today," she explained. "I haven't taken any for some time, because most Sundays they've had too many. Then last week I got there and found they didn't have a thing."

"But don't they know in advance what people are going to bring?" I asked.

"No," she said somewhat irritably, and I didn't venture more. But I reflected on the lack of foresightedness of some flower committees. You can hardly expect an arrangement to look anything but careless if the flowers have only arrived along with the congregation. And what a feeling of suspense there must be sometimes wondering if flowers are going to arrive!

This was one of the specific problems of small and rural churches which I discussed in a recent interview with Mrs. Adelaide B. Wilson, author of a new book, *Flower Arrangement for Churches* (M. Barrows and Co., Inc.).

A little reorganization, she pointed out, would correct this situation quickly. On your church bulletin board hang a calendar with ample space under each date. (You can make one, if you can't find a satisfactory printed one.) Here church members may sign up for certain Sundays when they intend to supply flowers, and you can see at a glance when your flowers will really be

needed. If you have a particularly lovely iris bed, for instance, which you can always depend on, you can sign up well in advance for the weeks these flowers will be available. Others can fill in the remaining dates as their flowers come along.

It is the duty of committee members, too, to spot usable floral material in members' gardens and request gifts from them. Someone may own green or flowering shrubs or a mass of ivy, which is just what you need for your arrangements, but because she doesn't actually have flowers to offer, she might never think of giving this interesting foliage.

Request your members to bring flowers to the church on Saturday evenings, so that they may soak in water overnight and be properly "hardened" before being arranged on Sunday. Members of the flower committee can then take their time to prepare thoughtful and artistic arrangements for the service.

How many churches have you known where one faithful, willing worker alone does the flower arrangements year after year? Such congregations, Mrs. Wilson feels, need a good shaking up and renewing like a feather bed.

"Even if what you've been having is good, a change is refreshing," she explained to me. In her book she says, "No person, no matter how long or devoted her service, is qualified to give flowers those new interpretations which come only from the interest and hands of many persons." She recommends having a flower committee of five members, even in small congregations, and letting them take turns, a different one being in complete charge of the decorations each week.

She adds, "When flowers are always bought and no garden ones supplied, as happens in city parishes, the most satisfactory system is to have a small committee responsible for the planning and buying of all flowers. Trained personnel know what is most suitable and one of the committee can recommend what is available in the markets and what the richest source will be."

I queried Mrs. Wilson for ideas on decorating for Easter.

"On the whole," she said, "I am strongly 'agin' overdoing it

where church flowers are concerned, but Easter is one time when you can stretch the quantity, because flowers are a part of the symbolism of the occasion."

For Easter at her own city church, Grace Episcopal, Newark, New Jersey, Mrs. Wilson prepared an abundant display of madonna lilies combined with white snapdragons and stock with a few spikes of yellow snapdragons to repeat the coloring of the superfrontal of antique lace over gold.

Smaller churches at Easter time might well take a tip from an idea she has used successfully. The altar is banked with potted hyacinths, tulips or daffodils. First, place a strip of waterproof plastic where you intend to set the pots. Then disguise the pots, she begs, rather than just setting them out wrapped in crepe paper or foil. You can slip each terra-cotta pot into a larger one of waterproof papier-mâché, such as florists use. To prevent plants from drying out fill the space between the pots with water-soaked sphagnum moss or peatmoss secured from your florist. Wedge it in place so firmly that you can tip the plants forward, if it is advantageous, to make flower faces look out instead of up. These papier-mâché pots can be painted green or any harmonizing color you wish. Then set your hyacinths close together and ranged diagonally back of each other among a bed of greens—laurel or evergreen, perhaps—to give a total effect of one rhythmic mass of flowers. Use matching plants so that there can be large center ones, and on each side, a gradual diminishing in scale toward the ends. If necessary, raise the center ones by setting on blocks of wood.

Of course, the loveliest flowers will fail to give the results desired if the worker has no understanding of the fundamentals of flower arrangement. Mrs. Wilson says: "Almost every newspaper and periodical adds something to the great store of information, and informative books are not hard to get at libraries." Practice at home with anything you can find, she adds. Your flower committee might profitably sponsor occasional meetings on flower arrangement for your women's organization. Invite an

expert to come and talk and demonstrate her art, providing new inspiration for committee members, and training future committee material.

"My major missionary effort," Mrs. Wilson told me, "is to give people a sense of freedom in church arrangement." In her contacts with various members of the clergy she has found them most receptive to new ideas. She has discovered upon careful research that there are practically no liturgical restrictions as to color, types or varieties of flowers used. The only restrictions are customs blindly passed on from one flower committee to another simply from habit.

Rarely is enough use made of foliage in church arrangements. In small communities where there are seldom funds for elaborate flowers, ingenuity can discover something available at almost any season of the year. Flowering shrubs, wild flowers and things that grow along the road have wonderful possibilities.

Mrs. Wilson discovered to her surprise that most churches have an inadequate supply of containers for flower arrangements. Some had no vases at all; others possessed only the brass, narrow-necked vases, which offer the greatest obstacles to the arranger. Since this type vase seems most popular, Mrs. Wilson set about devising a number of arrangements which can be used successfully with it. She recommends choosing flowers with smooth sleek stems, but also suggests trying to acquire a variety of vases so that the same ones need not be used all year around. In her book she suggests all sorts of containers in a wide range of prices.

With a little training in the art of flower arrangements, your committee will begin to develop a "nose for the unusual" and see countless opportunities for interesting ideas. It is not the material value of plants that counts, but the love and care with which they are arranged. The simplest flowers can speak eloquently of God.

## C H A P T E R 4 3



### *How to Decorate for the Wedding*

Picture your women's group as experts in wedding decorations. It's a glamorous idea, isn't it? And likewise a greatly needed service. Think of the young women who have been married with little or no decorations, who would have loved a more elaborate wedding but for the fact there was no professional decorator in your vicinity, or because they could not afford the added expense of such a service.

Wouldn't it really be fun for you as a group to study the decorating of your church, and be able to offer your services to any prospective bride to be married there? Perhaps, offhand, you think of this as quite a task. But that is because you are imagining the necessity of bringing in pots and tubs of ferns, small trees, and shrubs to furnish the proper background. A far simpler plan is that taught at a New York school, where an idea has been conceived for creating lovely floral effects with a minimum of materials and effort.

The backbone of this method of decoration is a foundation to support cut greens, referred to as the "baloney." This is a board three inches wide, which may be one to four feet long. It is padded an inch and a half thick on one side, preferably with sphagnum moss, but, if this is not available, ferns may be used, or grass cuttings, even excelsior, straw or hay, anything that can be bunched loosely as a base. This padding must be tied securely to the board with black cord or heavy thread, and, if excelsior,

straw or hay are used, it must be covered and tied in place with enough green foliage to give a green effect.

First step in organizing your wedding decorations would be to examine the architectural style of your church and visualize what decorations will be best suited to it. Plan the number and size of "baloneys" you will need to work out these decorations. You will doubtless want to set them across the entire front of your platform as a hedge. If this is circular, you may get a rounded effect by using short one-foot baloneys. If it is straight, the longer baloneys will be easier to manage. Measure baloneys the right length to lay up the sides of a pair of steps to the altar, too.

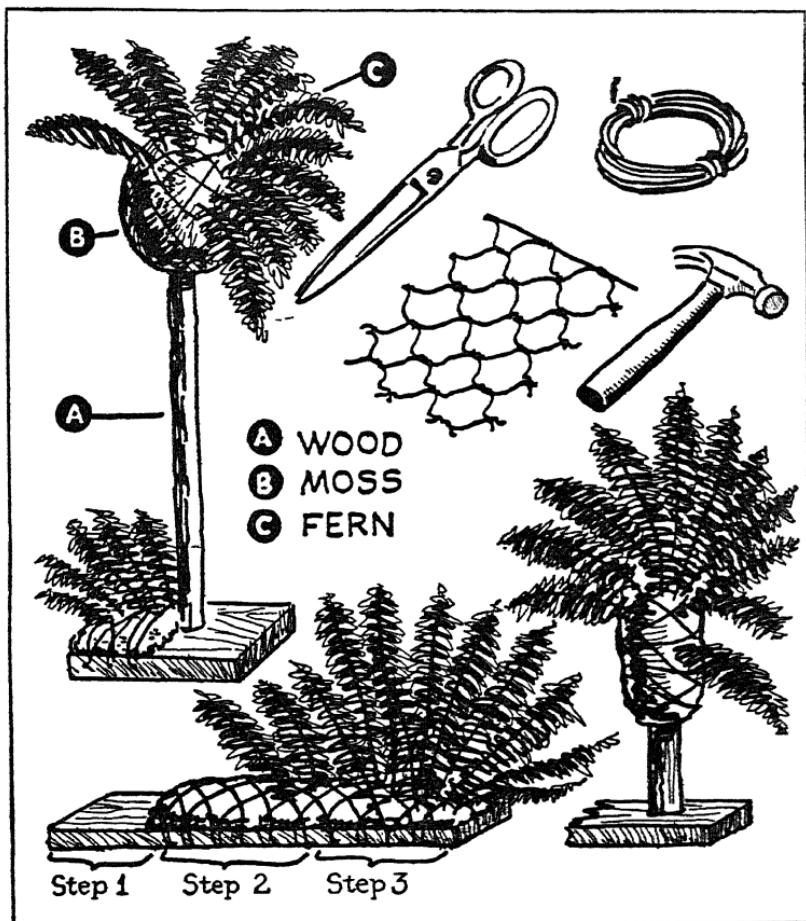
An altar rail offers interesting possibilities, and baloneys built to fit may be set along it and tied in place or fastened with Scotch tape. If your church is one of those few which have a stained-glass window above the altar, be sure to plan baloneys to rest on this window ledge.

For the making of these baloneys you may need to enlist the aid of some of the male contingent, but they are permanent supplies and may be used again and again. For height in the background you will need several standing baloneys. Take any young sapling, preferably silver birch, or the standard cedar fence posts available through hardware stores, one to three inches thick, and from two to ten feet high. You will probably need at least six of these of graduated heights. To the bottom of the sapling, nail a board cut square as a support. The board may be 6" x 6", 8" x 8", or 10" x 10" according to the height of your sapling. To the top of this sapling tie a thick ball of sphagnum moss, bunched fern, or whatever you are using. The board at the base may be similarly padded. Florists are also using plastic foam for the same purposes as baloneys.

Second step in your preparations is to assemble your working equipment. In addition to the proper supply of baloneys you will need: one or more sharp paring knives, flower scissors, clippers for foliage, wire cutter, Scotch tape, spools of black cord

or heavy black button thread, spool of picture wire, chicken wire, rolls of four-inch white satin ribbon.

Your church may already boast a good collection of large re-



Here are the tools, materials and steps for making the oddly named "baloneys" which will give that professional touch to your floral church decorations.

ceptacles or vases. If not, canvass your members for donations from their attics. The white ribbon is to be used for trimming aisle bouquets or marking off pews during the wedding. If your

church possesses a seven-branch floor candelabra, or a pair, you will find these most useful. If not, you may want to acquire some as the activities of your group grow in demand.

Third step is to organize your sources of supply for decorative materials. Leading authorities are agreed that only white flowers should be used in wedding decorations, so it may be necessary for members of the group who have gardens to assure themselves of sufficient decorative material by planting specially for this purpose. There is nothing prettier in the garden than white anyway, particularly a corner devoted all to white against a background of green shrubbery—a “bridal corner” for your garden. You may keep this corner bright throughout all periods of the blooming season by choosing white flowers that appear in each succeeding month.

Remember, too, that only the largest flowers are showy enough to be satisfactory in church decoration. You may choose tulips, white iris, white peonies and roses, lilies, gladioli, and pompon chrysanthemums. Some snapdragons, daisies, white delphinium, stock and foxglove may come in handy, and you will want baby's-breath and Queen Anne's lace for trimmings. For greens you will want huckleberry, laurel, flat ferns, syringa, bridal wreath, snowballs and, possibly, rambler roses. According to your locality other usable materials available either in gardens or near-by woods include: cedar, juniper, dogwood, privet hedge, pine, lemon leaves, boxwood, and even sumac and red oak leaves for fall.

Be sure to start your wedding preparations early the day before the wedding, and have plenty of workers assigned to various tasks according to individual preferences. Place one group in charge of cutting and bringing in the materials needed. Everything should be cut in time to stand in deep water for twenty-four hours before it is to be used. The baloneyes must also be soaked the same length of time. Tulips, or any flower with fragile stems, will stand up better if the stems are wrapped in several layers of newspaper before being plunged into deep water overnight. These same workers should be in charge of fastening the

soaked baloney in their proper places and setting up the standing ones in graduated effect the day of the wedding.

The first group having finished its work, it is time for the last three to go into action. One group will have charge of decorating the baloney; another of making flat arrangements to tie on the pews; and another to prepare the large bouquets in vases for altar and platform.

Fifty branches of cut fern will properly decorate a four-foot baloney. It may not take as many of other types of greens. With sharp paring knife in hand, cut the ends of your ferns or greens diagonally to form a point that can easily be inserted into the soft padding of the baloney. Stick the ferns in a circular arrangement at either end of the board, and you will have the lovely effect of two potted ferns. For a hedge along the front of your platform stick short pieces of laurel, syringa, hemlock, or other greens in a straight row along the baloney. Be sure to work them in thickly so that they cover the baloney. A little entrance effect can be made by using taller branches at the ends of the baloneys. Flowers may be mingled with these greens most effectively. Drooping foliage, ivy, or rambler roses may be stuck into baloneys on window ledges or altar rails to trail down gracefully.

Standing baloney may be decorated to simulate any kind of tree or the potted ferns one sometimes sees on tall stands. The sapling base blends in more naturally than the metal stands. For the lacy effect of a cymbidium fern, stick your baloney full of cedar branches.

Can't you just picture your chancel lined with a hedge of bridal wreath in May, or in autumn a hedge of red oak leaves combined with white pompon chrysanthemums? One word of caution: be careful not to use too many varieties of flowers or greens at one time, as this will create a hodgepodge effect. Choose one or two flowers and greens which are most abundant at the moment.

Plan where you will set your large bouquets. As many as six or as few as two may be used on the platform. Balance your platform by using one on either side of the altar at an even level.

Two may be placed on the altar, two more may be set on the floor, and if two more are used, they should be raised above floor level to give a graduated effect.

The last group of workers should become proficient in making flat arrangements for aisle markers. The basis for this is three large flowers, arranged in a triangle with stems tied. Use peonies, lilies, gladioli, and the like. These may be trimmed with a flowing white satin bow, and this arrangement may be elaborated to your heart's content. Three branches of asparagus ferns or other greens, baby's-breath or Queen Anne's lace may be used as background. You may even tie one or two other flowers and some greens to the bottom of the bouquet to hang upside down in a sort of bow-shaped arrangement. If so, keep the bow top-heavy. Tie bouquets to the ends of pews with wire or string. Bouquets need only to be placed on the ends of every third row of pews.

Imagination is the most essential quality in working with flowers, so use lots of it.

Practice will, of course, make perfect. Knowing your background, you can specialize in arrangements to suit its possibilities. Your knowledge may also be used to decorate the church for other special occasions, Christmas and Easter.

## C H A P T E R 4 4



### *Share Your Garden*

When your garden is its prettiest, gay with zinnias, snapdragons, marigolds and asters, do you sometimes feel a pang of remorse that so few people see and enjoy it? You've picked all the flowers you can use in the house; you've asked your neighbors to help themselves. Still there are flowers everywhere and to spare.

Surely, you think, there must be folks whose lives would be gladdened by the sight of those extra blossoms. But how to find them is the question that has you stumped.

It was for this reason that the National Plant, Flower and Fruit Guild was organized fifty-eight years ago. Their activities in this field may give you helpful ideas. Mrs. John Wood Stewart, the founder, realized people love to share their gardens—if only they know how. So she organized this kind of giving to make it simpler and more effective. The little seed of kindness she sowed took deep root and grew—until today, through its many garden clubs and branches, the Guild distributes flowers, plants, vegetables, fruits and homemade jellies and jams to the sick and to needy families. Institutions of all kinds which care for the poor and homeless receive an abundance of garden things, as do civic and veterans' hospitals, children and old people's homes, and welfare agencies for special cases.

"All the loveliness that came to me last summer reminded me of Tschaikovsky, who had an unseen and unknown friend who was very kind to him," wrote a shut-in who had received flowers

from the Guild's Brooklyn, New York, branch. Indeed, this is the prime satisfaction that comes with such gifts—the sick, the poor, the lonely, in hospitals, institutions and homes, feel there is someone who has not forgotten, someone who cares.

A Guild worker in California told of taking some flowers to a certain shut-in. When she found the little old lady living in a small house with flowers blossoming outside the door, she exclaimed, "Why, you don't need flowers! You have them."

The old lady shook her head and pointed to the wall of her room, where were carefully displayed a number of the tags which the California branches of the Guild attach to their garden gifts. "Yes, I have some flowers growing here," she said. "But these," pointing to the tags, "were *given* to me."

Tags used by these California branches read:

We'd like to send a garden  
To gladden up your room—  
A thousand laughing flowers  
All rioting in bloom.  
We'd tell each little blossom  
To whisper soft and say—  
"A friend there is who's hoping  
You're better every day."

Living close to the outdoors, you are apt to forget how much live, growing things mean to shut-ins, until you read letters like the following:

"Thank you for the pine branches—their fragrance takes me into the woods."

"I made four beautiful bouquets which I have so placed in my room that I feel as if I were in a garden."

"To those of us who cannot go outdoors these bright days, flowers make us feel that we are not losing all of the summer."

"I love these flowers, as you know—my room is very gay once more."

"Your wonderful gift of roses arrived. I just can't get words to thank you for your thoughtfulness."

The Troy, New York, branch of the Guild places individual flower vases in a home for old ladies, so that each lady may have at least one flower in her own room. A branch of the Guild in Northport, Long Island, New York, has as its special project the Government Hospital on the outskirts of the village, which houses and cares for mentally disabled ex-service men. Plants, flowers, fruits, cages of canaries and bowls of goldfish have been furnished to give these men some personal touch that makes them feel they are not forgotten by an outside world.

The Berkeley, California, branch consists of eight groups, six of which are located in different churches. From lists provided by the visiting nurses, these groups have distributed baskets of fruit, jelly, eggs, sweets, together with a bouquet of flowers to some sixteen homes of shut-ins each month.

Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, has been supplied with more than a hundred bouquets of garden flowers each week from May through September. Every child has a bouquet on his table. In Baltimore, Maryland, flowers are sent regularly to brighten the wards of the University Hospital and Volunteers of America Hospital.

Patrons of the public library in Youngstown, Ohio, admire and ask about the lovely flower arrangements throughout the library. Members of the staff are pleased to explain these are gifts from the Guild. The Henry Street Visiting Nurse Service, New York City, distributes jellies sent by the Guild to elderly patients who are bedfast and chronically ill. Hartley House, New York City, distributes jams and jellies to poor families, where sweets are a joyous treat for the children.

Ten garden clubs belong to the El Paso, Texas, branch of the Guild. The Lower Valley Club, which has an acre or more of land with fruits and some vegetables, as well as fine garden flowers, donates a quantity of these during the summer months to the old people's home and orphanages. Some clubs donate Christmas baskets; others make tiny Christmas trees to be "planted" on breakfast trays of the patients at the Beaumont National Hospital. Some donate potted plants that were started

in the fall—geranium, pepper plants and bulbs, all of which will be blooming by Christmas. The TB wards at City County Hospital are provided with fifty-seven Christmas baskets filled with candy, cookies and fruit. A personal visit accompanies the baskets. The Guild donates tubs of flowers for bouquets to be made by the American Legion and placed on graves at the National Cemetery.

The extent of your activities depends on the ingenuity of your group. Sending flowers often leads to discovering other needs which can be supplied by charitable groups. Many times you can get various organizations in the community to co-operate.

The Garden Club of the Kings Highway Methodist Church, Brooklyn, New York, which co-operates with the Brooklyn branch, has undertaken a special project. They are making a garden in a waste place in one of the poorest and roughest sections of this borough, where a flower planted near the street would never have a chance to bloom. The Methodist Spanish Center consists of two buildings, one made into a Methodist church, and the other an activities house. Between the two is room for a garden, protected from the street, yet available to the flower-starved population who are willing to treat it with respect. Plants, shrubs and flowers have been donated by the Kings Highway group to make the small plot a vision of freshness and beauty. This group also sends cut flowers for the daily vacation Bible school. Windows looking out on the garden give Sunday-school children a view of nature.

Distributed yearly in Louisville, Kentucky, are 6,094 bouquets, 690 plants, 1,020 baskets of flowers, 9,375 roses, glads, tulips, 38 baskets of fruit 162 bushels of various fruits and vegetables, five boxes of oranges, 306 glasses of jelly, 142 jars of jam and preserves, 150 holly sprays and 40 wreaths. Some 3,490 greeting cards are sent and 904 visits made to hospitals, institutions and individual shut-ins. There are other miscellaneous gifts of cookies, magazines, books and ice cream, and special bouquets are sent to the Service Club on their birthday celebration date, Easter and Mother's Day.

Among the biggest jobs done are those in Chicago and Boston. "Lilac Day" starts the season in Chicago, when thousands of bouquets of lilacs cheer the sick. Following it and throughout the summer, thousands of bouquets, as well as fruits, vegetables, jams and jelly, are distributed to settlement houses, hospitals, military and veterans' hospitals and individuals. At Christmas time gifts are sent to charity wards of hospitals and settlements. Volunteers go into hospitals to receive and arrange flowers, thereby saving nurses this fuss.

In Boston an independent group has been operating even longer than the National Guild. Called the Benevolent Fraternity Fruit and Flower Mission, it was organized in 1869. Here during a year 934 hampers and cartons of flowers are distributed from various centers, and 1,200 baskets and gifts delivered to sick or lonely shut-ins in their homes or institutions. More than fifty hospitals, nursing homes, homes for the aged and neighborhood centers are brightened with gifts of flowers.

You can organize a branch or subsidiary of the National Guild in your community. For information on getting started, address the Guild's executive director, National Plant, Flower and Fruit Guild, 125 East 57th Street, New York. She will also tell you if there is a branch already established in your community, with which you may affiliate.

Yours doesn't have to be a large group. A few women in a Long Island community, interested in putting their spare time to good use, offered their services to the old ladies' home nearby. Now their gardens are helping to brighten the days of the old ladies. The women furnish special flowers at holidays, give them jams and jellies. At Christmas they buy green or red handkerchiefs and, with a red ribbon, tie into them a handful of fragrant balsam needles, to be hung on bedposts. They also make miniature Christmas wreaths of balsam, for placing on trays. At Easter they make individual corsages or handkerchief bags stuffed with lavender.

Lists of persons who would appreciate receiving what you have to offer can soon be made up by consulting visiting-nurse and

shut-in societies, churches and individuals. In boxes to be mailed, some groups include a post card asking the recipient to write and let them know if the contents arrived in good condition. Boxes are labeled and addressed, then distributed to individuals who fill them with flowers from their own gardens and then mail. Some branches have been able to arrange free transportation and voluntary handling for their garden gifts.

Here are some other possibilities you might explore: 1. Using cars to take groups from homes for the aged on tours of various gardens. 2. Having large baskets of flowers in lobbies of city office buildings, where office workers might each secure a single blossom to place on their desks. 3. Starting a seed and plant exchange, where people who have little to spend for new varieties may trade their surplus seeds and plants for other varieties.

Other suggestions: placing window boxes in homes and institutions; establishing community, school, institutional, children's and home gardens in city and county; securing nature material for schools; and encouraging love for and protection of growing things and wild-flower preservation.

Here's a wonderful opportunity to prove that there is still room for small, kindly acts in this busy world. "Keep a candle lighted in the darkness!"

## C H A P T E R 4 5



### *Possibilities in Tours*

X The trend for tours of all kinds has mushroomed in recent years. X Restorations like Williamsburg and New Salem, where pilgrimages are made from building to building, are no doubt largely responsible for it. It's always fun to drive from one address to another, going into interesting places you have always wanted to see on the inside, and browsing around with friends. X

N There are so many possibilities in the tour idea. There are tours of buildings with historical significance, tours of unusual or attractively decorated homes, tours of churches, tours of model farms, tours to see people's collections or hobbies, as well as the more familiar tours of pretty gardens, schools, public buildings or business plants. X

O Observance of a special occasion may motivate such a tour, or individuals may decide they'd like to use their homes and possessions in this way in order to raise funds for charitable purposes. Whether you charge for the tour or not, tickets are a good idea; they insure an orderliness about the whole procedure. You may print your tickets something like a railroad does, with sections to be torn off each time a place on the itinerary has been visited. Each section of the ticket may give the address and a brief description of the place to be visited, saving much answering of questions. Or, simply provide one ticket with all the addresses, and punch it at each of the places visited.

Some localities offering tours of historical houses, largely for the benefit of tourists, provide a city map with a suggested

itinerary marked out to enable strangers to find their way around. Each house on the route is numbered on the map with a corresponding paragraph describing its history and significance.

Each stop on your itinerary should be clearly marked on the outside. A little stake in the front lawn bearing the simple word "Tour" is sufficient. Groups who are handling any decorations may embellish this to their hearts' content.

Providing transportation adds a lot of bother and is rarely necessary. Usually folks are happy enough to cover the route under their own power.

As to the various types of tours, one possibility is a tour of your community's churches. This can be a fine project for furthering good relationships between churches of differing faiths. And what a lovely Easter observance it could be! Churches might be decorated for the Easter service as early as Saturday morning, and be open to visitors Saturday afternoon. Something like this was worked out in Mason City, Iowa, in their week-long centennial celebration.

In early spring the Garden Club's Centennial Committee Chairman sent a letter to all the city's churches, saying, in part:

Because the Garden Club feels that there is no finer place for flowers to display their beauty, outside their natural setting, than in church, we are asking the churches of Mason City to join us in this community's observance of its centennial in a special decorating project. Briefly, the plan calls for members of each church to decorate their sanctuaries with flowers which they have grown. These displays are to be arranged for Saturday afternoon, June 13, the day preceding the Centennial Sunday, and the churches are to be open to the public on this afternoon. Church members are asked to be on hand to receive visitors and to conduct them on tours of the churches. This plan, we feel, offers not only an opportunity for Mason Cityans to become acquainted with the community's houses of worship, but gives church members a way to develop greater skill in arranging flowers for churches. The Garden Club maintains a Garden Center at the Public Library where material on flowers for churches is available. Members of the club will be glad to furnish

any assistance they can. We hope you will feel you can join in this plan of bringing both flowers and people to church on Mason City's Centennial.

In May a schedule with rules, points to be considered in the judging and an entry blank were sent out to each church. Co-operation was complete. Eighteen churches of different faiths participated. The churches were not in competition, but the Garden Club provided nationally accredited flower-show judge, Anna Berry Hausen of Clarinda, Iowa, who rated each church, awarding blue ribbons. She also offered suggestions and criticisms, working with the church committees and pointing out ways to improve flower arrangements. (Mrs. Hausen is the author of a book, *Arranging Flowers for Church*, available from Combs Printing Company, St. Joseph, Missouri.)

Flowers were in place on Saturday morning for the judging. In the afternoon all the churches were open to the public, with hostesses at each church to greet the guests who came to view the decorated sanctuaries and to tour the church. It was peony time, and the flowers were used generously and skillfully.

Hobby tours are also popular. You needn't worry about moving valuable or fragile articles to a central location. The hobbies simply remain in their natural habitat, and visitors come to look at them. This allows for showing many hobbies that might not otherwise be available. A collector of antique glass would rather show it as a table setting in her own dining room than risk carting it across town. One woman who had a collection of pitchers had built shelves out from her windows so that the sunlight would set off the lovely colors. What a shame to miss this collection in its natural setting! A woman with a knack for making hooked rugs would not relish taking up her stair carpet for a hobby show, but if you come and see it on her own stairway, she will be delighted. As for growing things, a collection of rare iris or Oriental poppies can best be shown right in its own garden.

Or people may wish to see the homes themselves. Elaborate

apartments and houses in New York City have been shown for the benefit of Wellesley College, and Mount Holyoke has sponsored tours of large estates in Westchester County. Hundreds of persons take these tours, for the purpose of gaining new decorating ideas as well as merely to see homes of well-known persons. Similar tours are conducted through beautiful estates in many parts of the country.

The Garden Club of Larchmont, New York, added a new twist to the tour idea last December. Instead of earning their annual funds by a spring garden tour, they chose six lovely homes, decorated them for Christmas, and sold tickets that enabled visitors to go from house to house, where they could pick up ideas for their own Christmas decorating. They called their tour, "Ideas for the Holidays." Similar successful plans are the "Christmas Caravan" in Pasadena, California, and "Christmas Walk," sponsored by the Garden Club of Highland Park, Illinois.

In Larchmont, New York, a tour of homes featured various themes carried out by each house. The first was decorated in the spirit of Christmas preparation. In keeping with its charming early American style, there was a tree decorated with popcorn and cranberry chains, gingerbread men, and striped candy canes, and the warm and delicious smell of Christmas baking—fruit cake, apple pie, cookies and even homemade bread! By the fireplace was a huge iron kettle filled with freshly popped corn, and there were popcorn balls in a wooden bowl. Knitted stockings hung before the fireplace.

The second house featured a Danish theme, showing a typical Danish Christmas table, a tree trimmed with Danish ornaments, and a kissing ring for the mistletoe. Arrangements of candles and greens were all in green and gold.

The third was the "Santa Claus House," with dining table set for a children's party, buffet laid with a village—houses, church, stores and even a train—made of candy, and other delights for little folks.

In the fourth home Christmas possibilities for an apartment

were shown, with a modern theme in shocking pink and green, instead of traditional red.

The fifth house represented Christmas Day, with table set for the Christmas feast, and decorations carried out in a pomegranate red to harmonize with the house decorations. Cranberries were shellacked and covered with glitter to spell the words, "Merry Christmas," against a banking of greens at the fireplace, and clusters of cranberry-red candles were used.

In keeping with a New Year theme, the sixth house featured bells of gilded chicken wire with trimmings of greens or of ribbons and Christmas balls.

How effectively this plan might be used any time of the year by featuring a tour of homes of successful hostesses in your community! The lovely homes might be used as background for the best artistic efforts of any gardening group. The hostess herself would be invaluable in setting the table to show her own particular style of entertaining. Clever little ideas, such as bringing in a first course of soup on a tea cart to be enjoyed in the living room, or of serving cut-up fruit from a punch bowl with tooth-picks to pierce the fruit will add interest to your tour. Every hostess has some clever stunts up her sleeve which she can display to give ideas to others.

You might have each house represent entertaining in a certain month—a Valentine's Day luncheon, a May breakfast, June wedding reception, Fourth of July picnic, Halloween treat, football supper, Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner. Or, one house might be decorated for a luncheon, another for formal tea, one for a children's party, one for a club meeting, one for a stag party. Take a tip from the Larchmont, New York, group: the most popular house of the tour had fresh-baked foods displayed as part of the decoration. Party foods all prepared and set in place would add immeasurably to the other decorations.

There are countless other ideas you might work out—tours behind the scenes of some of the interesting businesses in your community, such as manufacturers of women's hats or dresses, makers of ice cream, perfume, jewelry. By special arrangement

these businesses could open their doors to visitors as publicity. Such a tour might include model farms spruced up for the occasion, local government buildings, or a group of local restaurants' kitchens.

Just think what there is in your community that you would particularly like to see from the inside; then plan a tour around it. Doubtless these are the very places others have long wanted to see, too!

## C H A P T E R 46



### *Beautify Your Church Grounds*

On a bright spring morning a little group of men and women met in front of their church and took stock. A tumble-down shed in one corner and a yard full of rubbish cried aloud for attention. The white frame church itself, though in need of fresh paint, had a modest dignity which almost evaporated in these unsightly surroundings. The committee formed itself into a clean-up squad and went to work. By noon the yard was bare. Stopping for lunch and for breath, one woman exclaimed, "If we only had some money for shrubs and flowers!"

"Let's get what we need from the woods and swamp," one of the men suggested.

Though some were doubtful that they would find there anything they could use, the group went to see. Less than a mile away, they found forty varieties of shrubs used by landscape architects. There was an abundance of material to be had for the taking—with permission, of course. Together they worked out a plan for the church grounds, decided what they wanted and where each plant was to be placed, and sent out a call for volunteers.

A few days later a larger delegation of men brought back sixteen white cedars from three to twelve feet tall; one twelve-foot bush hemlock; one red-stemmed dogwood; one spice bush; six sweet viburnum; eight shrubby cinquefoil; and one nine-foot witch hazel. The market value of this load was estimated at well over two hundred dollars. Volunteer laborers dug, transported

and planted in accordance with the plan, and by evening the church grounds were transformed.

That led to further activities. A great maple in front of the church was cut down to allow a better view of the building from the road. An entrance driveway, curving in from the road, and a parking space for automobiles were laid out. Behind the church they developed a picnic lawn for community festivals. Fresh paint refurbished the building inside and out. The new beauty of this church has become an inspiration to the whole community.

It is not difficult to start an improvement project in your church. And spring is the ideal time to begin. Take stock of your needs. How does your church building greet the passer-by? With a heartening glimpse of trees and flowers on a green lawn? Or with barren, neglected grounds that frown at visitors? Even if your funds are low and there is no landscape architect within reach, you can still have a church setting which will make your church look as though indeed its people "worship the Lord in the *beauty* of holiness."

Start spreading interest in such a project by an illustrated lecture by a qualified person on community improvement work in general. Point out the fact that the church might take the lead and establish the example for the community. You may be able to secure sets of slides relating to this subject from your state college of agriculture.

Appoint a permanent building and grounds improvement committee to carry on activity and be responsible from season to season for developing the project. This might consist of five members whose terms of office would expire so that at least three members of the committee would carry over from the previous year. Through these three, the interest and enthusiasm and ideals would be passed on to new members.

In working out your plan remember to put first things first. If the church steps are broken or rotted away, it is far more important to repair them than to plant a few flowers at the side of the building. List things needed to be done to improve existing con-

ditions. Survey the property, develop a plan, and show how the membership as a whole can help to carry it out.

The first step in landscaping any property is to prepare a simple survey showing all existing features, preferably drawn to scale. Upon this sheet the ideas can be marked down. As they are carried into effect the plan will become a picture of the completed project.

A sheet of cross-section paper, ruled both ways to form small squares, will make this process easier. Measure the dimensions of your church plot and of the buildings, walks and existing planting. Use a long measuring tape, a stout cord with knots in it to indicate the foot marks, or a light stick with the foot marks indicated; or step off the distances after determining the length of the walker's stride.

Locate on this sheet, in proportionate size, all the buildings, walks and drives, and planting that is to be part of the permanent plan. Locate also the trees, list their size and diameter. Measure and indicate the property lines. This gives you a graphic basis for your plan. Now add the following information: name of building; kind of soil; amount of moisture; height of first floor of building from the soil, measured at all corners; direction of bad winds; unsightly views; good views; slope of the land; all available vines, shrubs and trees that can be collected wild.

Take photographs at this stage, and keep them for contrast with the appearance of the grounds after your plan has been put into effect.

Now you are ready to begin actual work on your grounds. A field day may be set to start these improvements, and as many succeeding field days as are needed. The local committee directing the volunteers for the field day should see to it that good leaders are chosen as captains of squads, and that each squad is assigned a special task. The value of this project lies in what it teaches the individuals, the good sport of a community enterprise, and the tangible results it produces.

A full day program is better than a half day. The schedule may be arranged like this:

9:30 a.m. Men go to the woods for plants.

12:00 noon. Picnic dinner prepared by women during forenoon.

This may be followed by a very brief speaking program.

1:00 p.m. General planting demonstration.

4:30 p.m. Clean up.

*Material required:*

a. For planting average shrubs and trees:

½ ball old binder twine

1 dozen old burlap bags

2 pails

1 old ax

1 pruning shears

Shovels, picks and mattocks

(Important: The pick or mattock is by far the best tool for digging wild plants. Plenty of tools should be provided so that no one need lack.)

Conveyance for transporting plants from woods, such as truck, old auto, lumber wagon or hay wagon.

One or two loads of well-rotted manure.

b. For planting large trees 4 to 6 inches in diameter:

All materials listed under a. plus:

25-30 feet stout hay rope

30 feet hay wire for bracing each tree set out

Several short pieces of strong boards

3 or 4 two-by-four poles

1 log chain

1 strong stone boat or lumber bob

1 team horses

1 plow

c. For grading and lawn making:

1 team horses

1 spring tooth harrow

1 plow

1 slip scraper

2 or 3 wheelbarrows or hand carts

½ ball old binder twine

plenty of rakes, shovels, picks, garden forks for everybody  
lawn roller

grass seed, manure, and other fertilizer. (These will vary  
considerably and cannot be specified except in each individual case.)

This information is provided by courtesy of the National Plant,  
Flower and Fruit Guild.

Here are some definite plans for specific areas.

If you have space at the side or rear of your church building, it can be developed into an attractive picnic grove or outdoor meeting place. Such an area should be level and covered with good turf. Shade is needed, but it should not be so dense as to spoil the growth of grass or to keep the ground too moist. A scattered planting of fine shade trees, such as red oaks, maples, or elms, is all that is necessary. To secure the partial privacy that makes such a grove most valuable, use hedges or border plantings of shrubbery. This need not constitute an outlay of money. See for yourselves how many suitable shrubs and trees you can find in near-by woods.

Picnics, lawn socials, pageants and entertainments can be held in such a spot—even church services, in warm weather. An area for games may be added. For the little folk, swings, teeterboards, slides and sandboxes could be built by the men. Basketball, volleyball, and tennis courts for older boys and girls and grown-ups will help to make this a rallying point for wholesome good times.

A "Garden of Memory" can be made out of a small space adjoining the church sanctuary. This gives people a lovely place for strolling quietly after church, renewing acquaintances and greeting the minister. If it adjoins a city church, with symmetrical lines and paths of flagstone or cement, the garden may be formal. Or if it is a country church, it may be given an informal treatment, with flowers simply banked on either side of a grassy path. A rosebush in memory of the sweet life of someone's

mother, a bed of pansies for thoughts of a friend who passed on, an evergreen tree, as enduring as the influence of the former minister in whose honor it is planted—these would be appropriate features.

Individuals and groups within the church will be interested in taking part in such a garden and contributing to it. But do observe these cautions: 1. See that every new plant conforms to your original plan, so that there will be no crazy-quilt effect about the garden. 2. Locate and develop the garden in such a way that it will not compete with the picture the church building presents, nor interfere with the appearance of the church as a dignified house of worship.

Instead of buying and discarding an expensive evergreen every year, many churches are acquiring growing Christmas trees. Practically every church property can have such a tree. A conical shaped evergreen with rich, dark foliage, one that will grow vigorously, will be best. Place it in the corner of the lawn, or at the side of the church building, but never in the center of the front lawn. At Christmas time it may be decorated with tinsel and lights, drawing attention to the church and adding beauty to the community.

Perhaps you would like to dedicate your church garden to growing authentic plants of biblical times! You want it to be a little special—to be closely identified with the church, as well as to afford a pleasant view to the passerby and a place to greet the minister and chat with friends after service. You want it to have educational value for everyone from Sunday-school age upward.

Already a few churches have accomplished these ends, and others are following their lead. In Coral Gables, Florida, a "Garden of Our Lord" is being developed next to St. James Lutheran church. Trees and plants like those that grow in the Holy Land are being brought in. Each is marked with a bronze plaque to honor some outstanding Lutheran and to give the name of the specimen and the biblical reference to it.

Latest addition to the garden's flora is a twenty-three-foot

olive tree cultivated in California from Mediterranean area seed. Another recent gift is a small acacia syeal, known in the Bible as the shittah tree, under the cool shade of which the Israelites sat in ancient times. The garden maintains a nursery where seeds from the Holy Land are planted. One of the most treasured packages it has received is seed from flowers now blooming in the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed before his arrest and crucifixion.

An older planting is the Carmel Biblical Gardens, adjoining the Community Church, Lincoln Street near Ocean Avenue, Carmel, California. Another is around the Methodist Episcopal Church of Elmhurst, California. This was planted to recognize and memorialize the work of a church member in the church Sunday school and to provide a phase of practical religious education.

Your best guide in planning such a garden is the book, *Plants of the Bible* by Harold N. Moldenke and Alma N. Moldenke (the Chronica Botanica Co., Waltham, Massachusetts, and Stechert-Hafner, Inc., New York, New York).

Although the climate of the Holy Land is more comparable to that of Florida, California and Arizona, there are plenty of authentic biblical plants which may be safely grown in northern climates, too, Dr. Moldenke advises.

Can you picture, for instance, a pool nestled in one corner of your plot with common reeds and cyperus papyrus growing at its border, and water lilies—nymphia cirulia and nymphia alba and nymphia lotus—floating on the pond? In your borders you could plant the saffron crocus, star of Bethlehem, hyacinths, the polyanthus narcissus, anemones (the actual “lilies of the field”), and the Sharon tulip, which has been found to be the real “rose of Sharon.” For trees you might choose the double-flowering almond, oleander, myrtle and bay, the Oriental plane trees, white poplar and cedars of Lebanon. For added interest you may grow in pots or with very special care through the winter date trees, acacias, small fig trees, pomegranates and sandalwoods.

There are hundreds of other rare specimens that individuals

with a "double green thumb," as Mrs. Moldenke puts it, might take pleasure in cultivating in church gardens. Dr. Moldenke, who is curator and administrator of the Herbarium, New York Botanical Gardens, can give you names of places which sell the rarer types of seeds.

A book published in 1941 for which the Moldenkes did research, and which is available in many libraries, is *Bible Plants for American Gardens* by Eleanor Anthony King. It tells what can be grown in northern, southern and central areas of the United States.

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